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ARCHITECTURE, BUILDING, CONTRACTING & DEVELOPING

March 2025

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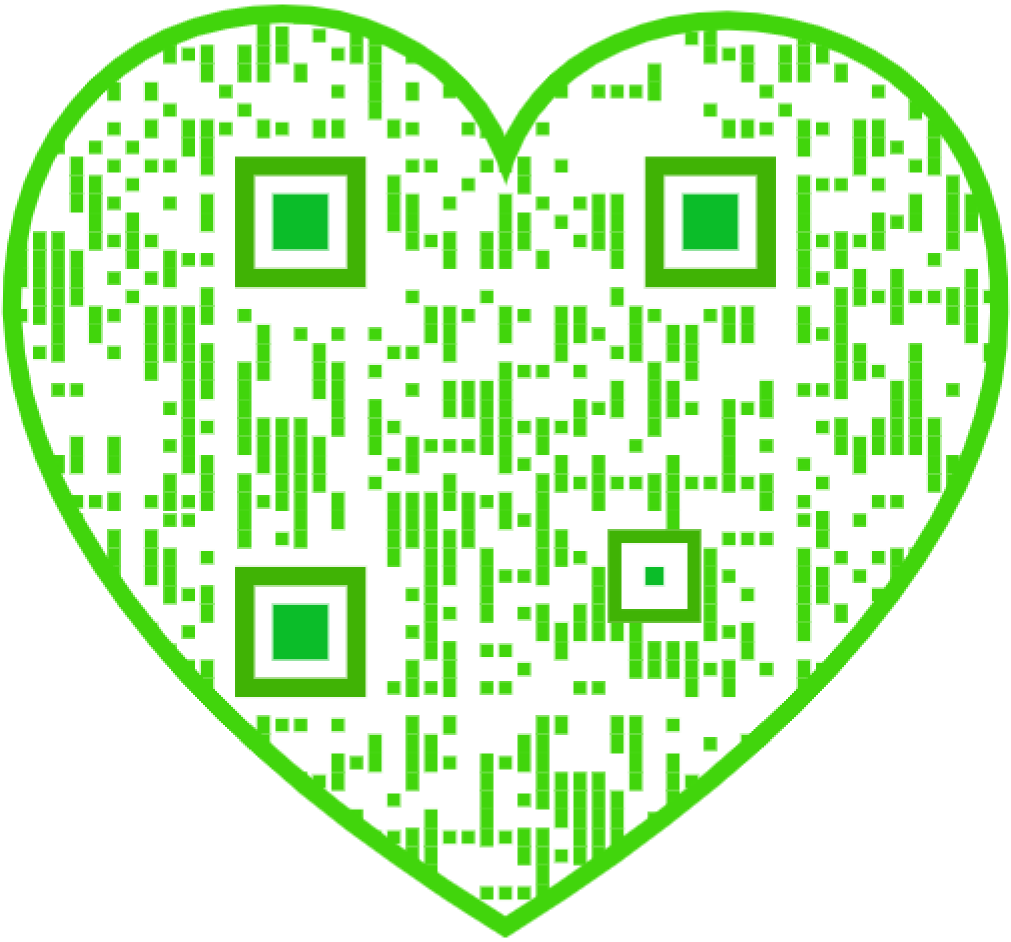

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on the cover

The **ECLISSE** Syntesis Flush collection of flush pocket, hinged and skirting products blends functionality with aesthetics, providing a seamless integration that elevates the overall look and feel of interior designs. The collection stands out for its minimalist design, which allows doors to blend effortlessly into the wall. **See page 33 for more details.**

welcome...

...to the March issue of ABC&D magazine...

This month we shine a light on Gort Scott's affordable homes venture in London's Walthamstow (page 04). The second of its kind for Pocket Living, the project provides 90 one-bedroom homes for local first time buyers on Forest Road facing both Lloyd Park and the Grade II* listed William Morris Gallery. Brick and precast concrete decorative details come together to create the distinctive character of the build which features Morris-inspired murals on its flank walls.

Our second project feature on page 10 documents Bennetts Associates' impressive repurposing of Edinburgh's former Royal Infirmary to create the new Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI). The main, central entrance, which is marked by its impressive clocktower has been reopened and a new public square has been created, with a flat plateau for external performance and unimpeded access.

This month's Hot Topic highlights seven issues that are affecting the construction industry in 2025 on page 20; GTC takes a look at the role heat networks can play in decarbonising new homes on page 28; Elizabeth Assaf discusses the role of doors in PassivHaus specification on page 32; and on page 38, Paul Williams looks at how to select and install a domestic extract fan to ensure high performance and longevity.

Ben Bryden discusses sanitaryware and storage trends for the bathroom on page 42; David Clark explores the technical advancements in rainscreen facade manufacture on page 48 and on page 56, Anne Jennings offers developers landscaping advice on increasing both aesthetics and BNG.

...from all at ABC&D...

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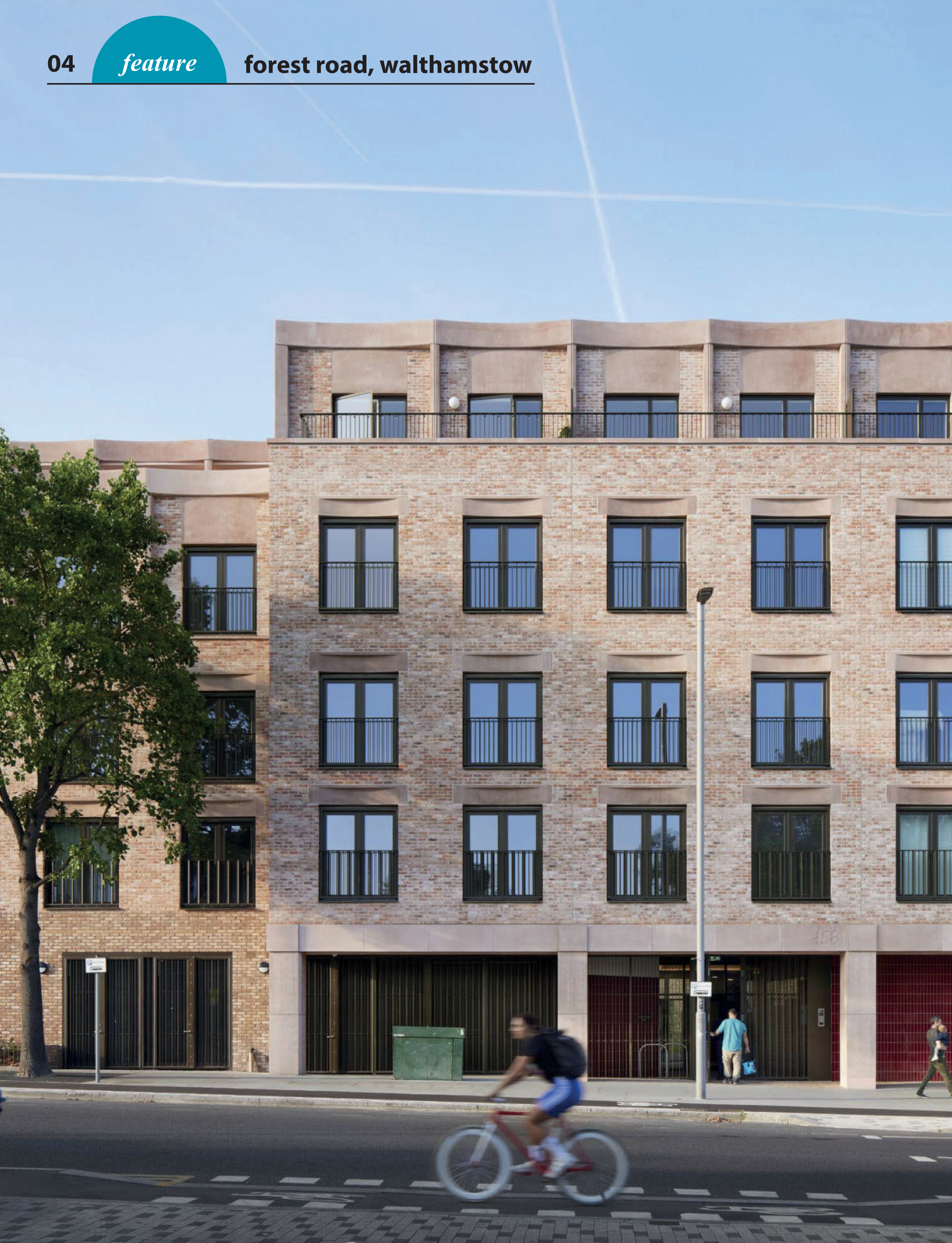
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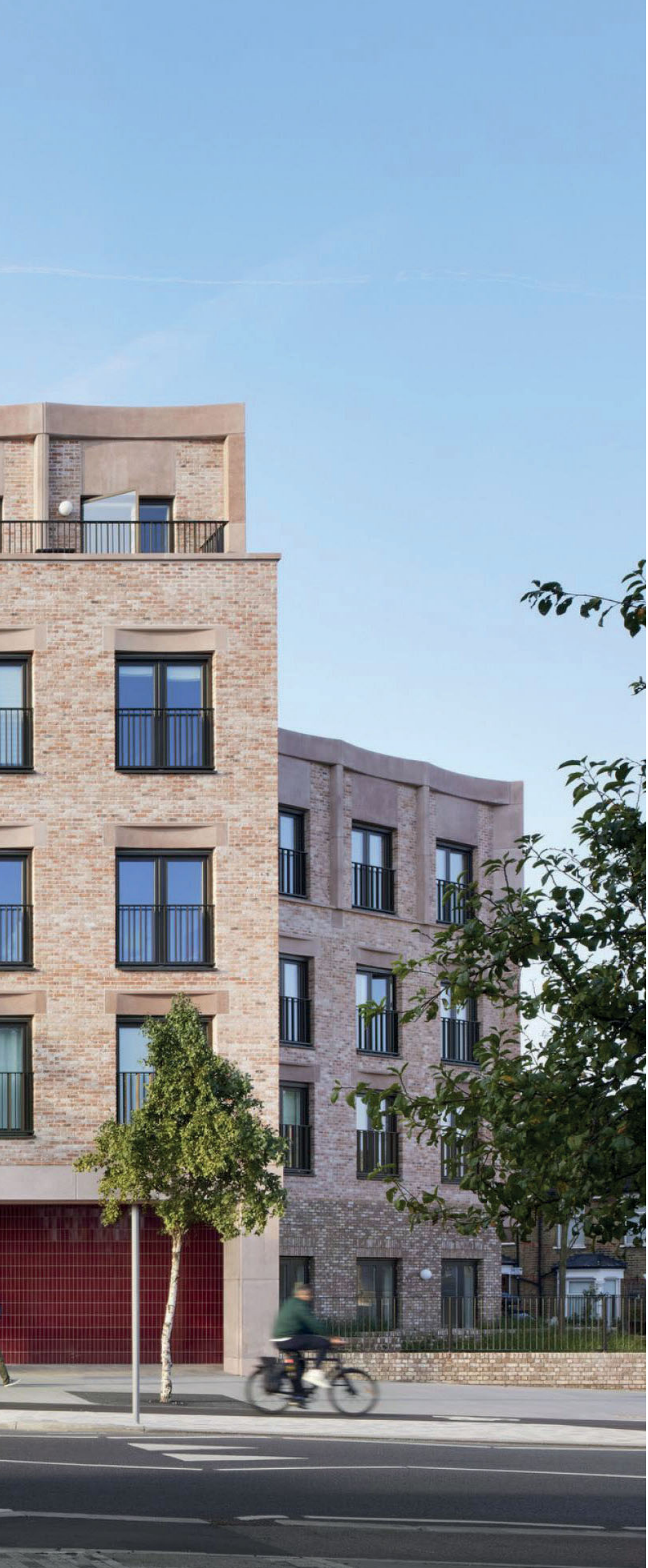


creating a sense of building community *in walthamstow*

***Gort Scott's** second project for Pocket Living in Walthamstow provides 90 affordable one-bedroom homes for local first-time buyers, on a prominent site opposite Lloyd Park and the William Morris Gallery — the Grade II* listed former home of the Arts and Crafts activist.*

The triangular site has contrasting contexts, with two-storey Victorian terraced houses lining streets on two sides and the arterial Forest Road as its main frontage. The scheme sensitively negotiates these differing characters with a sculpted massing that steps up from three to five storeys on Forest Road, re-establishing the street front on all three sides...

Just like at nearby Gainsford Road, Gort Scott was tasked with achieving high density within a predominantly low-rise context. This time, there were added challenges of a town centre location with heritage value, complex geometry and ground level changes. The combination of high-quality architecture with thoughtful consideration of the public realm, designed through clear consultation with the council and local community, were key to achieving planning consent.

The architect has evolved the language of brick and precast concrete decorative details first developed at Gainsford Road, maintaining visual continuity across the two schemes to create a relatable identity whilst giving the new building at Forest Road a distinct character.

> The design of the building and its communal spaces provide carefully considered opportunities for social interaction, alleviating feelings of isolation that can be experienced by solo living...
>
> *Gort Scott*

Inspired by the curved bay windows of the William Morris Gallery, lintels are gently concave to catch soft shadows that animate with changing light. This motif translates to bay windows and parapets, creating a scalloped ribbon that articulates the roofline. The material palette contains a mix of warm white, grey, plum, pink and red tones acknowledging the diverse colours of surrounding buildings, with a storey-height band of darker bricks forming a base to the building.

Walls with rich red-glazed ceramic tiles within a colonnade signal the main entrance, linking street front to communal courtyard. A raised corner garden facing Lloyd Park acts as a generous buffer to ground floor apartments.

The large, light lobby area on the ground floor serves as a welcoming environment where residents can interact and socialise. With long benches and individual post-boxes, the lobby encourages residents to linger, further strengthening the sense of community within the building.

Covered bike storage and racks for visitors' bikes promotes sustainable transportation options and encourages residents to lead active lifestyles. By prioritising accessibility and convenience, the design of Forest Road supports residents in making healthy choices and incorporating physical activity into their daily routines.

Whilst efficient and functional, layouts are augmented with a sense of community through a variety of shared amenities, including a sculptural triangular stairwell echoing the shape of the site.

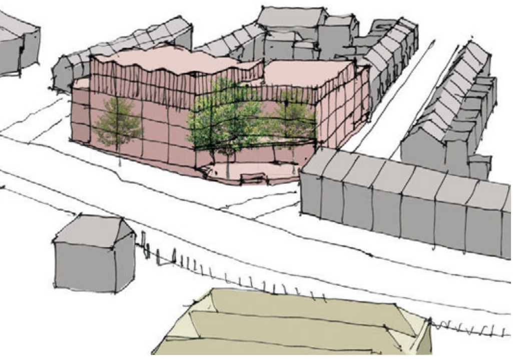
Blank flank walls at street corners have been designated for Morris-inspired murals by local artist Adriana Jaroslavsky as part of a growing street art tradition in Walthamstow.

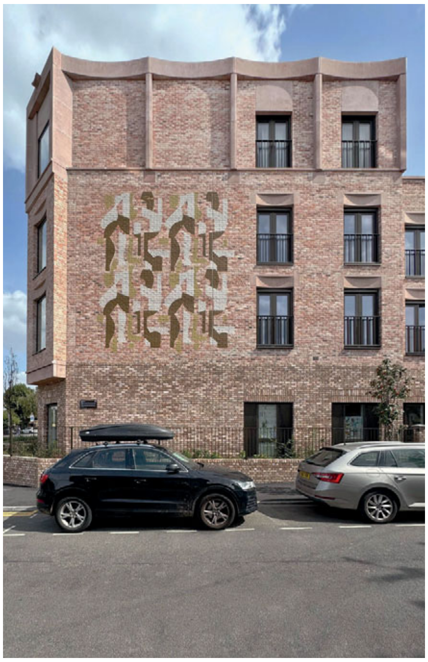
Hive Curates, in partnership with housing developer Pocket Living, hosted a competition amongst local artists based in Waltham Forest to design the mural. The selected Walthamstow-based artist Adriana Jaroslavsky proposal's connection to both the natural and social landscape of Walthamstow stood out to Gort Scott, linking to the local area's Arts and Crafts heritage with forms that create a dialogue with it's building's curved precast concrete features.

The homes at Forest Road are popular with residents who live solo, or in a partnership. The design of the building and its communal spaces provide carefully considered opportunities for social interaction, alleviating feelings of isolation that can be experienced by solo living. Communal spaces have been thoughtfully integrated into the design to foster a sense of community among residents.

Shared spaces include two roof terraces with views of Lloyd Park and a south-facing communal courtyard. The rooftop terraces offer residents a tranquil space where they can relax, socialise, and exercise. By creating opportunities for social connection, these communal spaces contribute to the overall sense of community and wellbeing throughout the building.

There are two well designed communal gardens, one at ground level and the other at roof level. These will be planted with seasonal flowering plants that will add colour and fragrance to the gardens. In the central courtyard on the ground level, planters are made available for residents to create individual and communal allotment spaces.





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tales of the *unexpected*

Reworking existing buildings as distinguished as the Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) is the provocation for an approach to architecture that embraces the unexpected.

In some respects nothing changes – the need for architectural integrity, the rigorous pursuit of low carbon, the combination of spatial enrichment and functionality – but, in others, everything is refreshingly different. ***Rab Bennetts****, Founder of Bennetts Associates tells ABC&D more...*

A new identity

As a fine example of Scotch Baronial architecture, designed by David Bryce in the 1870s, it was not the most obvious canvas on which to create an institute for the future. The strength of its historic associations for Scotland's capital city provided a challenge to its new identity but, nevertheless, the first decision was to reassert the existing building's confidence by reopening the main, central entrance marked by its impressive clocktower, long subjugated by the A&E facilities at its east end, so that its stature could be enhanced and upheld. To do this, a new public square has been created, with a flat plateau for external performance combined with ramps that circumvent the formal flight of steps to provide unimpeded access.
This was by far the most controversial issue during the planning stages, as it entailed removal of an earlier gatehouse and some of the original railings, but it facilitated a change of perception and a prominent new public square for Edinburgh.

The slope of the terrain meant that, with the north-facing main entrance at level 2, there was potential with modest excavation for an unusually large auditorium beneath the new square, linked to grade level access from level 0 at the south side of the building. Flanked by two rectangular, glazed 'light-boxes', the square is demarcated by its translucent edges, whilst daylight is reflected down the sides of the 450-seat space below.

The formal symmetry of the former Royal Infirmary also means that the new square and auditorium are perfectly central, something that would have been unlikely with conventional, modernist planning. EFI's centre of gravity is, therefore, unambiguous, its new identity underpinned by the square and its expansive but partly-concealed facilities below.

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Symmetry also dictated the size and location of two new additions, large enough for 200-seat lecture facilities that could not fit within the former wards. These adaptable spaces are inserted between pairs of wards east and west of the clocktower, their contemporary glazed facades contrasting with the rugged stonework on either side. Window openings are retained, but the detail of each infill echoes the sash windows that have been removed.

Spatial experience

Throughout the interior, all the new interventions follow the same tall floor-heights of the existing building, partly to avoid awkward access issues but also to liberate the design from conventional room dimensions. In consequence, the loftiness of rooms and circulation spaces permeates the users' subconscious. It's as if the university now inhabits the chateaux that were echoed in the Scotch Baronial style.

The hospital layout relied on a long corridor that separated the six castle-like wards at each of the four levels, to ensure that they were sufficiently far apart to reduce contagion and to enhance both daylight and ventilation. For its 21st century incarnation this was far from the ideal layout, but corridors and stairs still perform their vital educational function as the vehicle for serendipity, exchange of ideas and social cohesion. To achieve this, an additional ribbon of accommodation was built alongside the corridor's south side, doubling the width available and creating space for meetings, refreshments, workspace and chance encounters along its 140m length. It also allowed the insertion of an imposing staircase at each end, separate from the escape routes so they can be a visible magnet for vertical movement. This central spine, rather than the more functional wards, now forms the primary spatial experience for those who use the building. As a memory of the old hospital, it has moved on, marked fleetingly by a few of the original donor boards that aided its construction, but its character has been determined more by improvisation than by the initial design.

Florence Nightingale's influence on the design is most evident in the wards, which determined the height of each floor for both natural light and ventilation. The temptation to divide them up for cellular workspaces was resisted, leaving the elegant proportions of their width and length for open plan teaching or working. Where each ward meets the central corridor, the 'knuckle' of accommodation for medical support has been replaced by a cluster of small rooms containing toilets, servers, riser shafts, a new escape stair and a lift, with any remaining space devoted to a range of enclosures for meetings or small seminars. As a result, the rich textures of the tall corridors contrast with the saturated colour of the support spaces which lead, in turn, to the white simplicity of the open-plan wards. It is hard to imagine a spatial sequence of that type anywhere else.

Functionality

At an early stage on the design process, it became clear that the new structures on the north and south sides of the corridor were clashing with the rhythm of the existing building. An analysis of the digital survey showed that Bryce had used a 12ft (3.6m) grid to set out the walls and windows, which was similar to another heritage project (by Nash) undertaken by Bennetts Associates in London. Therefore, rather than using multiples of a more conventional 1.5m module, the new structure was set out at 3.6m intervals, so that it aligned with the stone piers of the corridor at all times. It seemed that the romantic overtones of this Scotch Baronial edifice had a rational underlay – something that became even clearer when the engineering was further examined.

Another early visual inspection led to questions about vertical buttresses on the exterior, one at each end of the facades to all the wards. Bizarrely, these buttresses were wider at the top, not the bottom as would have been expected of a functioning structure, which suggested they might be concealing air ducts with increasing thickness towards the top. Not only did this turn out to be the case, the observation led to further discoveries of horizontal timber ducts within each floor, leading to a vertical stack of ducts that terminated in the six spires at roof level – one for each block of wards. Winddriven ventilation appeared to have operated by suction throughout the building, but much of it had been lost and it is not known how effective it was in operation. Three of the spires had been removed so these were replaced with facsimiles of the others, which were restored. As the old hospital's ducted ventilation system wasn't required any more, the spires were used instead as the gathering point for all the new vent pipes and services, providing a practical and symbolic representation of their former use. As with the planning grid, Bryce's final composition was far from the wilful drawings of the early design and the imposition of engineering had helped to enrich its architectural form.

The castle-like turrets at the end of each ward presented the opportunity for an architectural twist. Whereas most Scottish castles have spiral stairs in their circular turrets, the former Royal Infirmary used them for basic accommodation such as a restroom or toilet. However, its new uses required an additional fire exit at the end of every floor and, rather than add a visually obtrusive external escape stair, one of the two turrets in each ward was hollowed out to provide a spiral stair instead. Its location was ideal and the 'castle' regained an unexpected degree of authenticity.

Contrasting textures

Among many unwelcome discoveries were structural failures, hidden alterations and, above all, dry rot. The existing building was already in poor condition when it was vacated in 2003 and water penetration over the subsequent 14 years before repair work could start left a legacy that was predictable in nature but not in extent. So extensive was the degradation that approximately 50% of the timber floors had to be replaced and most of the plaster wall linings had to be removed, as the lathe was rotten almost everywhere. Quite apart from the enormous cost, the extent of the dry rot forced a rethink; should the wall and ceiling finishes be reinstated or did the dry rot present an opportunity to reinforce the change of identity from a hospital to an educational bastion?

With the addition of the expansion space to the south and lecture-type spaces to the north, the corridor no longer had external walls, so the need for thermal insulation disappeared. This meant the lathe and plaster wall lining did not have to be

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replaced, leaving an unintended patchwork of stone, lintols and infills exposed to view for the first time. It was not what David Bryce had envisaged, but the highly textural surfaces had obvious appeal. Similarly, when the corridor ceilings were removed, vaulted brick arches were found between what were once external windows, whereas the junction between the corridor and each ward had to be rebuilt with timber and a flat ceiling. Exposing the brick vaults was irresistible and the intermittent rhythm of the plain areas presented an opportunity for wayfinding and strong colour, highlighting the location of each ward in the lengthy building. The colours, which also saturate the internal rooms of each functional 'core', are more vibrant and urban to the northern wards whilst those facing south adopt more rural tones appropriate to their original prospect at Edinburgh's perimeter. At the corridor's ends, where the wards are close together on opposite sides, contrasting colours collide to create focal points for the east and west extremities.

All the wards have been stripped back to reveal their former grandeur, with low level ceilings and services removed in favour of simple well-lit interiors with minimal interventions other than suspended lighting. All other services for these intensive workplaces, including substantial IT provision, are packed into floor ducts.

For the most part, the clocktower's internal features have been retained and reworked, but the grand staircase to the upper floors had no downward connection below the main door at level 2. The rooms alongside the stairwell had been mutilated by dry rot and non-original connections to adjacent buildings, so the remaining floors were removed, a new connection created and a stair constructed to the lower levels. The voluminous 'left-over' space between the new stair and the old walls provides the setting for public art.

External interventions and repairs

Externally, the clocktower's new stair is expressed as a tall, glazed slot within the original stonework, filling in an unsightly gash left behind when bridge-links had been brutally inserted and then removed many years ago. How to deal with this kind of damage prompted various responses in the reworking of the exterior.

Where there was a close correlation with the new functions inside, major openings have been left in place, repaired and re-glazed to record less-attractive aspects of the building's history and use.

Where there was no sensible reason to retain the damaged areas or the proliferation of openings undermined a coherent composition, a pragmatic decision was made to repair and reinstate the form of the original building. In a few cases, such as the ground level of south-east and south-west wards, new openings have been created out of paired windows, as if they had been there all along. By contrast, the new opening through the clocktower at level 0 is clearly expressed as such, to signal the points of access to the general public. Similarly, the largely glazed southern extension to the corridor forms a highly visible counterpoint to the stone wards where it bursts through the east and west facades, once again advertising the points of access.

Stimulus for new forms

Although the same architectural approach of rigour and rationality is found in new buildings, it is clear that reworking existing properties invites creativity within a very different context. From the urban realm to the interior, the restraints and opportunities open up entirely different forms of spaces and experiences, many of which are not found in newbuild equivalents. At EFI, some of these were preplanned and evident well before construction started, but others were the product of discovery, requiring inventiveness and collaboration at a time of contractual restraint. The resulting architecture is undoubtedly richer and more stimulating spatially than most university projects and presents a more compelling mix of past and future for Edinburgh's new Futures Institute than would have been possible elsewhere. The tales this exceptional building can tell are about not only the past and future inhabitants but also the impact of the unexpected, when new and old combine.

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Willow Dene School receives new SEN modular building for sixth form students

Willow Dene School needed to expand its estate with a new SEN building for its sixth-form students. Leading modular building specialists, Wernick Buildings were willing and able to take on this challenge.
The sixth form block is a project delivered by the Royal Borough of Greenwich Council for Willow Dene School, part of Compass Partnership. Focusing on modern education requirements, the new building will provide teaching spaces for newly formed groups of students over the age of 15. With its students in mind, the building required specialist features to safeguard the students along with supporting the staff.

Royal Borough of Greenwich actively addressed the increasing demand for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEN) provisions for students in the local area. In collaboration with Willow Dene School, the Council's Education and Child Services departments played a key role in defining the requirements for extending support to students with special educational needs. The Borough committed to funding the development of additional facilities on one of the school's two sites to meet these requirements, reflecting their dedication to enhancing educational provisions and supporting the diverse needs of the community.

A modular building solution with student's safety in mind

The building consists of 14 modules which were manufactured 'offsite' in South Wales at Wernick's specialist manufacturing facility. Each module was transported and craned into position at the school to form the completed building. This was ideal for the estate as the building needed to be positioned within a tight space tucked between the existing school building and car park.

Modular buildings can be installed quickly and efficiently, often during holiday periods, ensuring minimal disruption to daily activities. Designed with the needs of SEN students in mind, this building incorporates thoughtful features to support its users. These include lockable doors, which can only be operated by staff, ensuring a safe and controlled learning environment.

The building also includes a lift system to ensure wheelchair users can access the first-floor classrooms and breakout spaces, ensuring inclusivity for all students. On the ground floor, a designated changing and hygiene room offers a comfortable and convenient space for students when required. Other internal spaces include classrooms, a reception area, a staff room, breakout rooms, and well-equipped toilets. These are all designed to support the students' needs and help run the school efficiently.

"We already knew who our end users were and knew that they were a combination of young people with medical and access needs, and some very energetic lively young people. So, our priorities were to have two classrooms, one with all the accessibility that our more complex young people would need and one with a lot of access to space," said Rachel Harrison, Executive Head Teacher at Willow Dene School

Breaking the stereotype of modular buildings

The planning process for the sixth form block involved several key stages to ensure compliance with local regulations and community needs. At the start, a planning consultant, recommended by the council, was employed to conduct a thorough analysis of local planning policies.
There was a big focus on sustainability and operational considerations.

London Borough engaged with the school's Head Teacher, Rachel Harrison, and Operational Lead for Special Schools, Claire Celisse, as Inclusive Design Leads for the project. Rachel, an experienced educator and advocate for inclusive practices, ensured that the design process addressed the needs and perspectives of the school community, focusing on inclusivity and accessibility. Together with Claire, they reviewed all design proposals to ensure that the Willow Dene community's specific requirements were met. Providing valuable insights and feedback that guided the project towards solutions prioritising inclusivity, accessibility, and functionality.

Wernick was able to work closely with the school and its stakeholders throughout the development of the project. This allowed Wernick to successfully deliver a space that supports Willow Dene's mission of providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for students with special educational needs. The result is a thoughtfully designed building that promotes learning and accessibility.

Sustainability principles were considered as a priority based on the initial client's brief and integrated into the design, including features such as a green roof and heat recovery mechanical ventilation systems. Initially, the client's brief was aiming for BREEAM Excellent, but after pre-application discussions, these were adjusted to BREEAM Very Good to better align with planning feedback and budgetary constraints.

By combining innovative modular construction with thoughtful design, the project demonstrates how modern buildings can deliver practical solutions for specialist education. Willow Dene School now has a versatile, purpose-built environment to empower its students and staff for years to come.

"Wernick were absolutely brilliant at listening, taking our feedback, changing the design and the requirements," concluded Rachel Harrison.

www.wernick.co.uk

New book on climate change

Tunley Environmental has announced the release of 99 Facts of Climate, Science and Society. This innovative book combines scientific expertise with actionable insights, equipping readers with knowledge to navigate today's most pressing environmental issues in an engaging and easy to understand format.

Written by Tunley's team of PhD-level sustainability scientists, the book explores 99 carefully curated facts across climate science, biodiversity and human impact on the environment. Each fact aims to demystify complex concepts around climate change into accessible insights, providing readers with the tools to better understand and address these challenges.

With a foreword by Elena Doms, CEO of At Earth Plus, the book showcases Tunley Environmental's expertise in simplifying complex topics like carbon and sustainability for a broader audience. Elena says: "As scientists themselves, [Tunley Environmental] have communicated a complex topic of carbon in both approachable and actionable way. The result is a book that is not only informative but also forward-thinking, combining the power of science with the creativity of technology and the stunning force of nature to reach a wider audience."

It also features visuals generated by AI as a symbolic nod to the pace of technological innovation and environmental change, underscoring how quickly both are reshaping our world.

The book is available for purchase from ***www.tunley-environmental.com/99-facts-of-climate-science-and-society***

26
In 2020, the world average ecological footprint amounts to 2.5 global hectares per person, compared to 1.6 global hectares of biocapacity. [12]
27
Over five decades, consumerism accelerated plastic usage from 150 to 460 million tonnes annually, exacerbating global environmental degradation. For reference the entire world's population weighs approximately 287 million metric tonnes. [13]
99 FACTS OF CLIMATE, SCIENCE, AND SOCIETY
WRITTEN BY SCIENTISTS AT TUNLEY ENVIRONMENTAL

Licensing of construction companies is needed, says Federation of Master Builders

The Government's support for the creation of a new single construction regulator is welcome news, but it needs to go further to create a full licensing scheme for building companies, says the Federation of Master Builders (FMB) in response to the Grenfell Inquiry Phase 2 Report.

Brian Berry, chief executive of the FMB said: "The Grenfell Tower inquiry report has a crucial role to play in ensuring lessons are learnt about building safety. The Government's decision to act on all 58 recommendations set out in the report is welcome news, particularly the decision to create a new single construction regulator to make sure those responsible for building safety are fully accountable. This is something the FMB fully supports. However, a vital step to deliver long-term change must be the introduction of a licensing scheme to ensure domestic building companies have proven minimum competence. Currently anyone can call themselves a builder and this can't be right, particularly for those working in the domestic building sector."

Berry continued: "The development of a minimum competency scheme for builders of major construction projects was a key recommendation of the inquiry. This needs to be extended to all construction workers. If we think the situation is challenging for Tier 1 firms, the picture for small building companies and sole-traders is even less clear, given they don't have inhouse resources for training and HR. The Government now has the opportunity to work with the construction sector to introduce a full licensing scheme for building companies, which will help drive up standards and make construction safer for both builders and consumers."

Government recommits to updated TIC Policy Roadmap

The Structural Timber Association (STA) has welcomed the announcement by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA), confirming the Government's recommitment to the Timber in Construction Policy Roadmap, which outlines measures to increase the use of timber in the construction sector.

The announcement, made by Environment Minister Mary Creagh at the Timber in Construction Summit in London, comes as part of a new vision for the UK Government to deliver on its Plan for Change by increasing timber use in construction and boosting economic growth.

The updated roadmap builds on the original policy ambitions, adding more stretching targets and a clearer focus on helping the Government deliver on its commitment to building 1.5 million homes during the next Parliament.

The STA, alongside Timber Development UK (TDUK) and the Confederation of Forest Industries (Confor), played an instrumental role in the creation of the original policy roadmap and have long campaigned for recognition of the crucial role timber has to play in solving the UK's housing shortage.

Speaking on the announcement, Andrew Carpenter, chief executive of the STA said: "This is a substantial step forward and we are extremely pleased to see the Government underlining its commitment to meeting these ambitious house building targets. Increasing the use of structural timber and offsite manufacturing is one of the most effective ways of ensuring the rapid and high-quality delivery of these vitally needed homes, while also meeting urgent decarbonisation obligations."

Stuart Goodall, chief executive of Confor, commented: "In light of domestic timber security, we particularly welcome the roadmap's focus on increasing productive forestry and on promoting the use of homegrown wood-based construction products. Both of these actions will make an important contribution to achieving the UK's net zero target and economic growth."

discover the future of housing at *FIT Show 2025*

FIT Show – the essential event for construction product specifiers – returns to Birmingham's NEC from 29 April-1 May 2025...

FIT Show 2025, the UK's premier trade event for the window, door, flat glass, hardware and components industry, is returning to Birmingham NEC from 29 April-1 May 2025. For construction product specifiers, this event presents an unparalleled opportunity to discover cutting-edge products, stay ahead of industry trends, and build valuable partnerships with key suppliers.

Whether you're focused on energy-efficient building solutions, sourcing compliant products, or staying updated on the latest regulations, FIT Show 2025 is the must-attend event for construction product specifiers.

Discover energy-efficient and compliant products

At FIT Show, you'll find products that meet the latest energy efficiency standards and regulations, ensuring your projects are sustainable and future-proof.

From high-performance windows and doors to cutting-edge glazing systems, get access to the latest energy-efficient solutions that will help you meet the demands of modern housing developments.

Build strong supplier relationships

Meet face-to-face with leading suppliers and manufacturers. Gain insight into product availability, lead times and logistics, allowing you to ensure your projects stay on track and meet deadlines.

Find affordable, high-performance solutions

Explore energy-efficient products that not only meet regulatory standards but also provide long-term value and savings for your projects. Access competitive pricing on high-quality solutions designed for both residential and commercial developments.

Gain expert insights and watch live demonstrations

Stay ahead of the curve with expert-led CPD seminars (supported by GGF & FENSA) and live product demonstrations on the Installer Demo Zone. Learn about the latest trends in energy efficiency, smart technologies and construction materials that can improve the sustainability, performance, and design of your housing projects.

Network with industry leaders

Form valuable connections with architects, developers, manufacturers, and suppliers to enhance your projects. Collaborate with industry experts and establish relationships that will drive the success of your future developments.

Source solutions for refurbishments and maintenance

For specifiers overseeing refurbishments, discover tailored replacement products that meet original specifications while offering long-term durability, energy efficiency, and enhanced security for housing stock.

FIT Show 2025 is the essential event for construction product specifiers, providing everything you need to make informed decisions, source innovative products, and build strategic partnerships for your next housing project.

For more information and to register for your free ticket, visit ***https://forms.reg.buzz/fit-show-2025/abcd***

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Manchester Digital Campus gets green light

A major government office complex has been given planning consent to be built in Manchester.

Manchester Digital Campus will be a state-of-the-art hub constructed on the former Central Retail Park in Ancoats after the city's planning committee approved the Government Property Agency's (GPA) scheme in February.

The campus will bring together a number of Civil Service departments with a focus around digital skills and create significant employment opportunities and economic benefits in the region.

Mark Bourgeois, CEO at the GPA, said: "We are delighted with the decision and are grateful for the support of the many stakeholders in Manchester. The GPA team is proud to be working on this exciting project in support of the Government's growth mission."

The GPA exchanged contracts to acquire 5.5 acres of the former Central Retail Park in Ancoats from the city council in May last year with a view to constructing a state-of-the-art digital campus. Both the agency and Manchester City Council have been working together on the plans for Ancoats, culminating in a parallel proposal for the digital campus and an adjacent public park.

The council and the GPA held a joint consultation around emerging plans for the former retail site in August and September last year, inviting local residents, businesses and other stakeholders to help guide proposals to create the new government digital campus – delivered by the GPA – and a new city centre park space, delivered by the council.

Mark added: "We are pleased to be working with Manchester City Council on these regeneration plans, and look forward to creating fantastic and sustainable workplaces to support the transformation of the Civil Service."

New environmentally-friendly mortar reduces heat loss

A mortar made from recycled plastic and silica aerogel which improves insulation and reduces plastic waste has been developed by Newcastle University researchers.

The team hope this new building material could reduce heating and cooling bills while being environmentally friendly.

They developed the cement mortar mix by replacing sand with silica aerogel and recycled PET plastic which they then showed improved thermal insulation and weighs less. Aerogels are known for their high insulation properties and are increasingly used for thermal insulation, particularly within the building sector and in aerospace.

Publishing in the journal Construction and Building Materials*, the team shows that the new mortar mix reduced heat loss by up to 55% compared to conventional mortar, while maintaining the required strength for masonry construction.

It also meets international standards (BS-EN 413-1:2011, ASTM C270-10, AS 1012/AS 3700), presenting an eco-friendly alternative for energy-efficient and sustainable construction.

This could improve sustainable construction practices while reducing heat loss in buildings, in areas where you get thermal bridging, for example through gaps between bricks in the walls which are filled with mortar.

**https//doi.org/10.1016/j.conbuildmat.2025.140320*

RIBA Bristol & Bath to sponsor new programme of talks

Bath Preservation Trust (BPT) has announced a new programme of events, which have been developed with the support of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Bristol and Bath. The talks will be held at the Museum of Bath Architecture on the Paragon in Bath.

Tickets are available to buy for all talks from *www.bath-preservation-trust.org.uk/programme/*

The new talks, titled Midweek Monthlies, will be delivered by a variety of industry experts, and will explore themes including urban rewilding, regenerative design, adaptive reuse, creative engagement, sustainable landscapes and planting. The aim of the talks is to share insights and projects from leading designers and architects which demonstrate best practice, sustainable development and design excellence.

Talks scheduled so far are as follows:

- 02 April: "Shrewsbury Flax Mill" – Geoff Rich, Director of Heritage & Creative Reuse FCB Studio
- 07 May: "Regenerative Places: Designing a sustainable future" – Tara Gbolade & Lanre Gbolade, Gbolade Design Studio
- 04 June: "Place-Sourced Potential" – Jonny Buckland, Studio Saar
- 02 July: "Lessons from the Campsite" – Tom Russell, Emmett Russell Architects
- 06 August: "Making Space for Girls" – Caroline Millar, Make Space for Girls
- 10 September: "The Kindest Garden" – Marian Boswall, Marian Boswall Landscape Architects
- 01 October: "Consult the Kids" – Ben Spry, POoR Collective
- 12 November: "Grey to Green" – Nigel Dunnett, Department of Landscape, University of Sheffield

Alex Sherman, CEO at Bath Preservation Trust, says: "The programme includes themes of biophilic design or "the love of nature" and all talks consider the need for a more sustainable and inclusive approach, providing design excellence and great places for people. The programme will be of interest to anyone who wants to find out more about regenerative design."

Top 100 Most Influential Women in Construction Awards returns

The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) is delighted to announce the launch of the Top 100 Most Influential Women in Construction Awards for 2025. Returning for the fourth year, the awards will continue to highlight the significant contributions of women from across the construction industry and showcase women in the sector in order to make female and non-binary role models more visible and accessible. Nominations are now open and close on 6 June.

Judges will assess nominees based on five key criteria, including mentoring others in the industry and demonstrating exceptional leadership, to ensure a fair and consistent evaluation.

The categories are:

Local Hero – This category celebrates women making a significant impact at a local or regional level. Whether through community projects, SME growth, or advocacy, these individuals are shaping the industry from the ground up.

One to Watch – A rising star demonstrating exceptional potential, leadership, and innovation early in their career. They need to have been in the industry for three years or under.

Woman on the Tools – Celebrating excellence among tradeswomen, recognising skill, leadership, and contribution to the industry.

Most influential ally group – Recognising a group (rather than an individual) actively championing and supporting women in construction. This category is open to women and men.

Most influential contractor leader – Recognising leadership in the contracting sector, from major contractors to specialist trades.

Most influential designer – Celebrating leadership in architecture, engineering, or design disciplines.

Most influential client – Recognising a woman on the client side who has driven transformational change in construction.

Most influential educator in construction – Celebrating those shaping the next generation through education, training, or mentoring.

Most influential SME / trade leader – Recognising women leading small to medium enterprises, specialist trades, or independent businesses.

Nominate someone for the Top 100 Most Influential Women in Construction Awards at ***www.citb.co.uk/about-citb/top-100-most-influential-women-in-construction***

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seven issues affecting the *construction industry in 2025*

The construction industry is navigating a period of significant change, shaped by new government initiatives, regulatory shifts, technological advancements, and global challenges. These factors are creating both obstacles and opportunities for growth. ***Ian McKinnon****, chief product officer, Veriforce CHAS, highlights some critical issues that will define the sector this year and outlines how industry players can adapt...*

1. Ambitious government building plans

The UK government's "Get Britain Building Again" programme has set the target of constructing 1.5 million homes over five years. This effort is guided by a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), prioritising brownfield redevelopment and selective greenbelt land release (referred to as grey belt). The plan also includes support for New Towns and infrastructure improvements.

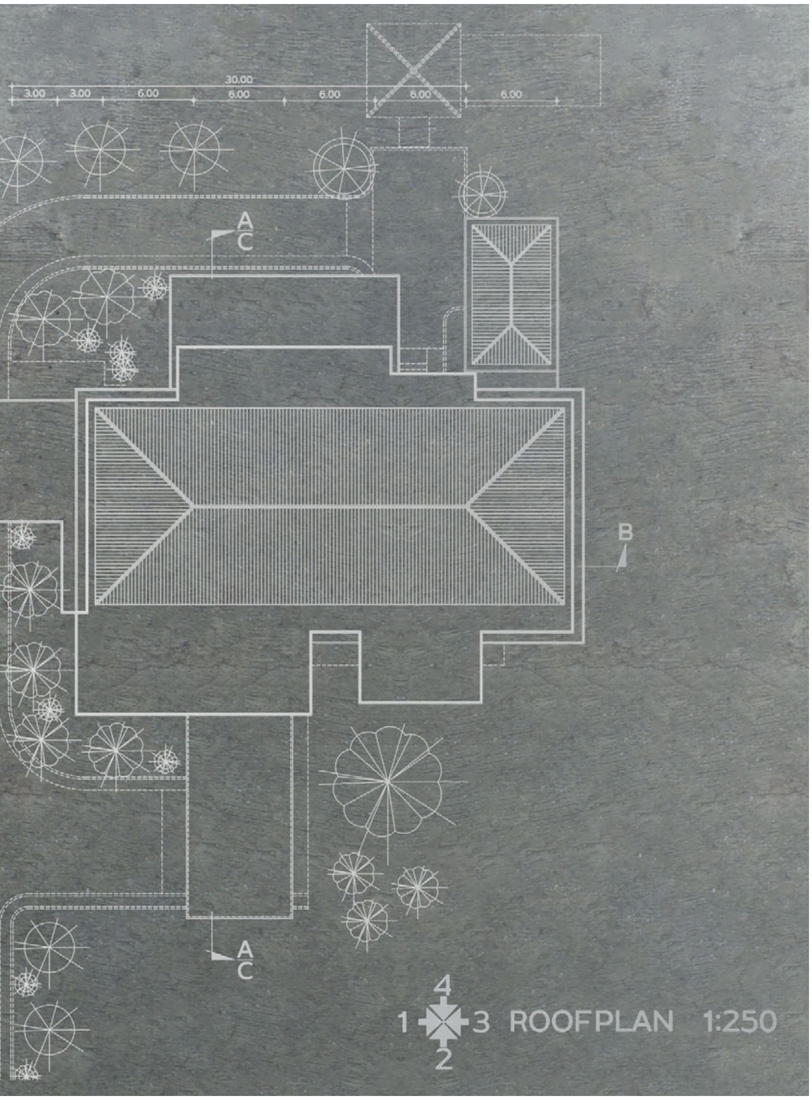
While there is scepticism that these numbers are achievable in the timescale, these initiatives promise to boost employment for contractors. However, rising workplace fatalities highlight the need for better training and strict safety compliance.

Action: Contractors should adopt best practices like the Common Assessment Standard (CHAS Elite) to enhance safety, credibility, and tender prospects. Tools like the Veriforce CHAS Client Portal can help hiring clients identify verified local contractors to maintain compliance and ensure efficient project delivery.

2. Building safety overhaul

The Building Safety Act 2022 continues to reshape safety regulations and accountability in construction. From March 2025 all new care homes, regardless of height, must include sprinkler systems. Meanwhile, the expiration of old-style CSCS cards by December 31, 2024, signifies an ongoing drive to upskill the sector.

Action: Sign up to the Building Safety Regulator e-bulletin to stay up-to-date with regulatory changes. Check out the BESA's 'Play it Safe' guide, which communicates safety concepts in accessible terms, and can help ensure all workers understand their responsibilities under the Act.



3. Launch of Central Digital Platform

The Central Digital Platform (CDP), launched in February alongside the Procurement Act 2023, represents a significant modernisation in public procurement. This centralised hub aims to streamline government procurement activities, increase transparency, and enhance efficiency, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). With features like a unique supplier identifier and a "Tell Us Once" system for supplier data, the platform should simplify processes for both suppliers and contracting authorities. However, it does not replace prequalification checks or due diligence.

Action: To prepare for registration suppliers should gather essential information, including company details, financial standing, and records of exclusion grounds. However, be aware that while the CDP simplifies data handling through its centralised approach, it does not verify or evaluate supplier qualifications, making it crucial for suppliers to maintain compliance with prequalification standards like the Common Assessment Standard (CHAS Elite) to enhance their eligibility for government tenders.

4. Workforce challenges in construction

Persistent labour shortages remain a significant issue for the sector, with employment in construction 10% below pre-pandemic levels. Brexit has reduced the availability of European workers, while the government seeks to reduce reliance on overseas workers through initiatives like Skills England and changes to the apprenticeship levy. Additionally, new regulations under the Employment Rights Bill will enforce bans on zero-hour contracts, grant flexible working rights, and strengthen union protections.

Action: Employers should explore apprenticeship grants and prepare for upcoming changes to employment laws. Companies employing foreign workers should also be aware of the 31 December 2024 e-visa registration deadline. Missing this deadline doesn't automatically affect immigration status but will make it harder to prove. Details are on the gov.uk website.

5. Putting occupational health and safety front and centre

With the latest HSE figures revealing a 20% rise in fatal construction injuries over the past five years, the construction sector must intensify its focus on health and safety to protect workers and prevent further tragedies. The high-risk nature of the industry, combined with the pressures of increased construction activity under ambitious government building plans, makes stringent safety measures a top priority. Businesses must ensure compliance with updated regulations and promote a culture where safety is embedded at every level.

Action: Contractors should implement regular safety audits and training programs to minimise risks. Adopting recognised standards like the Common Assessment Standard (CHAS Elite) can enhance safety credibility. Meanwhile tools such as the Veriforce CHAS Client Portal can help businesses find subcontractors that meet robust safety and compliance standards, fostering safer worksites across the supply chain.

6. Mental health as a strategic goal

The construction sector has the UK's second-highest suicide rate, with many workers reluctant to discuss mental health issues. A 2024 survey by Causeway Technologies found over half of construction workers had experienced mental health challenges, and 12% reported suicidal thoughts.

Action: Employers can lead change by prioritising mental health as a strategic goal. The Veriforce CHAS Mental Health & Wellbeing Evaluation, which has seen widespread uptake since its launch in 2024, offers guidance on implementing best practices, empowering businesses to support their workforce effectively.

7. Driving sustainability in construction

Sustainability is no longer optional. Regulations such as the Procurement Act 2023, which will come into force in February 2025, require companies to demonstrate factors such as environmental responsibility to secure contracts. Meeting net-zero targets means adopting low-carbon materials, energy-efficient designs, and better waste management. Beyond compliance, sustainability offers cost savings, improved reputation, and a competitive edge.

Action: Conduct a sustainability audit to identify areas for improvement. Certifications such as BREEAM and LEED can help showcase environmental leadership, while tools like CHAS Social Sustainability help benchmark your organisation's performance.

Conclusion

By being aware of these critical issues and addressing them proactively, construction companies can overcome challenges, seize opportunities, and build a safer more sustainable and resilient future.

For more information about how to proactively manage risk in your business and supply chain, visit: *www.chas.co.uk*

Thin Flat and Multi Ridge roof tiles installed on Somerset housing *development*

FP McCann is supplying its thin leading edge interlocking concrete roof tiles branded Thin Flat to a new housing development in Somerton near Yeovil, Somerset. The Somerton Mead site is a 69 plot collection of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom houses by national builder Bloor Homes.

Bloor Homes South West division completed phase one of the Somerton Mead housing development last year. With the addition of 69 homes in phase 2 and 3, the site will comprise 130 homes between Bancombe Road and Bradley Hill Lane in the north-west of the town.

To complement the properties, many of which consist of buff reconstituted stone walls to mimic the natural Somerset limestone, FP McCann Brown and Terracotta Thin Flat concrete roof and Multi Ridge tiles have been specified by Bloor Homes and installed by Taunton based roofing company, Deelis Roofing. Some 35,000 Thin Flat tiles together with 2,500 Multi Ridge tiles will be required to complete the 69 houses. The FP McCann concrete roof and ridge tiles have been supplied from the company's new ultra-modern £30m tile factory in Cadeby near Nuneaton, Warwickshire. FP McCann's stylish looking low-profile Thin Flat tile is also available in Black, Anthracite and Rustic Red and features a smooth, non-textured finish and straight cut edge.

Commenting on the Thin Flat and Multi Ridge roof tile installation, Keenan Hanratty, site manager for Bloor Homes said: "The low-profile brown and terracotta concrete tiles give the roofs on the new houses a distinctive stand-out appearance as to our design specification. The durable tiles are easy to fix with minimum breakage recorded. We will certainly consider using FP McCann's roof tile range on any future home building schemes".

Further expansion at the fully automated Cadeby factory will shortly mean the introduction of additional tile profiles. All FP McCann concrete roof tiles and accessories are of the highest standard and are covered by a 15 year Guarantee.

JG201

JG6
BBA
easy-trim

all to see and do at UKCW London:

architecture, net zero, workwear, tool hire, and more

UK Construction Week (UKCW) is gearing up to celebrate its 10th anniversary with a host of newly announced areas and features at the London show (ExCeL, 7-9 May)...

Exhibition highlights

High-profile speaker programme

Shadow Housing Minister, Kevin Hollinrake MP, and Tom Copley, Deputy Mayor of London for Housing and Residential Development, are just two of the high-profile names amongst the first set of keynote speakers announced for UKCW, alongside over 300 other thought leaders and experts in sustainability, planning, procurement and infrastructure.

Some sessions of interest to ABC+D Magazine readers include:

- *Delivering 1.5m Homes: How Construction Can Meet the Challenge:* 8 May, 11:15am, Main Stage. Led by Charlotte Garratt, Head of Industrialisation at Kope, find out what challenges the industry faces of scaling up delivery while maintaining quality, sustainability, and affordability. Join industry experts and influencers as they discuss the practical steps needed to turn this ambitious target into reality.
- *Villa Park Reimagined: A Sustainable Future for Matchdays and Beyond:* 7 May, 2:45pm, Net Zero Hub. Join keynote speaker, Andrew Watkin, Transport & Estates Development Manager at Aston Villa Football Club to learn more about the bold redevelopment plans for Villa Park, designed to enhance matchday experience while prioritising sustainability, heritage and community. This talk delves into how Aston Villa is integrating high-quality and thoughtful design with a vision to create a world-class, year-round destination. Understand more about how Villa Park is setting a new standard for sustainable stadium development, and how you can get involved.

The Stone Show & Hard Surfaces

The only event designed to cater for the whole construction supply chain for the first time in its history, the co-located event will feature an array of exciting initiatives and exclusive launches. Supported by show partner, Stone Federation Great Britain, it is three days of inspiration and innovation.

Workwear & PPE Live by PCIAW®

Making its debut appearance at UKCW and working in an exclusive partnership with the Professional Clothing Industry Association Worldwide (PCIAW®), visitors can explore the dedicated show for construction clothing, footwear, and accessories, and stay ahead of the curve. A range of seminar sessions and the show's first ever 'catwalk' performance can also be attended.

The Offsite Show

Following the huge success of its debut appearance at UKCW London 2024, the co-located show will be returning in 2025 to shine a spotlight on sustainable technology with a focus on the best practices for the industry to work towards Net Zero.

HVAC+R

Launching at the London show in partnership with Datateam Business Media, HVAC+R is dedicated to the heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and refrigeration industries. UKCW serves as a platform for HVAC+R businesses to reach housebuilders, developers, contractors, housing associations and local authorities.

Onsite On Hire

Following its successful debut appearance at last October's Birmingham show, Onsite On Hire will be making its return to London after 16 years. Running alongside UK Construction Week, it is a hire industry showcase designed to show the very best tools, compact plant and equipment exhibitors.

Attracting over 18,000 visitors, UKCW London 2025 will also feature a new VIP pass, allowing visitors to elevate their experience for just £99 per day.

To find out more about both shows and to register for UKCW London for free, visit ***https://forms.reg.buzz/ukcw-london-2025/cab-pr***

ISO-Chemie

www.iso-chemie.eu/en-GB/home

ISO Chemie has appointed a new technical consultant for the central east and south of England regions as it continues to expand its national operations and invest in growth.

James White, who comes from an industrial and commercial flooring background and has extensive experience of dealing with architects and installers, will be responsible for developing additional new business among window and doors fabricators, installers and specifiers for the company's range of advanced sealing solutions.

ISO Chemie specialises in the manufacture of foam products from polyethylene (EPE), polypropylene (EPP) and polyurethane (PUR) using the latest production techniques. Its products are used for the fast and effective air tightness sealing of windows as well as other joint and gap sealing applications in the building, eco-build and construction sectors.

Andy Swift, ISO Chemie's sales and operations manager – GB and ROI, said: "James's industry experience will be beneficial as we look to develop our presence further across central and southern England, where there's significant opportunity and demand for quality products.

"He will be looking to build market share for our range of added value insulation, acoustic and airtightness tapes in the wider construction and building sector as well as the window and door specification market."

JG202

Tata Steel

www.colorcoat-online.com

Tata Steel's Shotton Works, the home of Colorcoat pre-finished steel, has achieved The Wildlife Trusts' Biodiversity Benchmark for land management, as part of its wider sustainability commitment. This makes the site based in North Wales the largest industrial manufacturing site in Wales to currently hold the nationally recognised standard for commitment to biodiversity and responsible land management.

Launched in 2022, Tata Steel's Shotton sustainability commitment set out a long-term strategy focussing on four key pillars: reducing the site's carbon footprint; developing products that enable sustainable construction; biodiversity; and maximising material efficiency and achieving zero onsite waste. A key ambition for the biodiversity element was for Shotton Works to achieve The Wildlife Trusts' Biodiversity Benchmark and demonstrate how the site protects and expands the biodiversity that co-exists on the industrial manufacturing site.

Tata Steel achieved the standard by integrating the biodiversity commitment throughout its processes and wider sustainability strategy, including setting out a clear biodiversity policy with performance indicators to measure progress, clear action plans to deliver against and a robust integrated management system for the Shotton site.

JG203

Haddonstone

www.haddonstone.com

Cast stone manufacturer, Haddonstone, and mineral processing specialist, Longcliffe Calcium Carbonates, are not only close in location – Northamptonshire and Derbyshire respectively – they also mirror each other in terms of quality, sustainability and technical prowess so that high-end developers can incorporate the very best in UK cast stone creations for residential projects.

Haddonstone's production director, Katherine Kates, explained: "There is a host of reasons why we work with Longcliffe. The quality of the quarry's aggregates means we can be totally confident in our resultant product's strength and durability. We can also assure discerning customers that we have adhered to stringent standards and environmental considerations in our supply chain; we can trace the whole local journey with Longcliffe."

JG204

Kinedo

https://kinedo.co.uk

The Kinedo team has announced the appointment of Chris Sherwood as area sales manager for the Central Region and George Barber as area sales manager for the South West. The pair joined the company at the end of 2024 and have undergone a comprehensive training programme. Both have now settled into their respective areas.

Chris previously worked for Robert Lee Distribution and Q4 Bathrooms and has also run kitchen and bathroom showrooms for various merchants, whilst Chris was previously at Porcelanosa working on specification projects with new build developments.

Both managers are tasked with building brand awareness in showrooms, merchants and installers, along with winning specification deals to accelerate growth in each area.

JG205

Keller Kitchens

www.kellerkitchens.com

In 2021, Keller Kitchens and parent, DKG, joined forces with farmers' organisation, ZLTO, and two carbon farmers near to the group's Bergen op Zoom factory with the aim of capturing CO_2 from the atmosphere which is then processed naturally and stored into farm land soil. Simply put, the crops convert the CO_2 into carbon chains via photosynthesis while the organic matter that is built up promotes soil fertility so crop growth increases.

Four years on and Keller/DKG are delighted to report that the initiative is working extremely well and the CO_2 is binding into the soil better than expected. In addition, biodiversity is increasing, and agriculture is proving to be resilient to climate extremes. Recent tests have highlighted a significant increase in soil organic matter which has resulted in additional CO_2 being removed.

JG206

FIREFLY Phoenix vertical system protects Excel London expansion

One of **FIREFLY's** largest contracting partners has successfully completed the erection of a full height flame and smoke barrier as part of the enablement works for an important new extension to London Dockland's iconic Excel London which hosts multiple construction shows and events for other sections every year.

KRASI Fire Protection carried out the installation of the well proven and fully certified FIREFLY Phoenix 120 fire barrier. Given the sensitivity of the location, with public events in progress throughout much of the contract duration, rigorous precautions had to be taken to avoid disturbance and to contain any construction detritus from reaching other parts of the building: a requirement simplified thanks to the ease of fixing and very low wastage that distinguish the FIREFLY systems from alternatives on the market. All work was carried out in full compliance with the latest requirements of Approved Document B and other Building Regulations as well as the recently enacted Building Safety Act.

The 800m^2 barrier was created using FIREFLY's Phoenix system along with Collaroll and the manufacturer's fire-resistant adhesive and heavy-duty staple guns to secure the specially treated, non-woven material to a framework formed from 50 x 50mm steel angles. In achieving this, KRASI had up to half a dozen of its highly trained operatives on site at any time, with the installation taking a total of six weeks.

KRASI's Contract Manager, Daniel Oldacre, commented: "While FIREFLY offer our favourite fire protection products for any barrier work, and we always tend to recommend them, in the case of the work at Excel London Phoenix the company was actually specified by the client. FIREFLY's technical consultant, Dave Allen provided guidance for the flame break and smoke barrier which rose the full three storey height of where the new extension meets the existing exhibition halls."

"Then, as well as our own certification work in line with our IFC accreditation, employing the Bolster system, Dave returned to site several times to carry out inspections. The barrier will offer 120 minutes integrity from either side and could remain in place once the new area is complete."

Manufactured from woven and non-woven glass, the FIREFLY range is designed to optimise resistance to flame and smoke as well as offer heat protection in a wide range of scenarios. The barriers are easy to install horizontally or vertically using a full selection of FIREFLY ancillary products to ensure a fully tested and certified installed system.

email: info@tba-pt.com
web: www.tbafirefly.com

Bradite's busy bodyshop boost

A busy East of England vehicle repair specialist has a tough, bright new bodyshop floor, thanks to discovering one of **Bradite's** top coatings.

The Bodycentre is a major automotive repair shop in Norwich, handling an average of 60 vehicles weekly for bodywork and structural repairs, paintwork refinishing and a wide range of other treatments.

"After some trouble with other floor products in the past we decided to speak to a local paint supplier, called PaintWell," said Jake Masters, The Bodycentre's Digital Marketing Executive. "After much discussion about our previous attempts at doing the floor with no great success, they advised that we use Bradite Floor-it."

The job was undertaken by a team made up of The Bodycentre's own staff, including technicians, the general manager and one of the directors. "The application was very straightforward," said Jake, adding, "recoat time was exceptional. It took us about a day to prep the floor ready for the product to be applied, but once this was done and all necessary objects were masked up, it took us just under ten hours to apply three coats."

And the verdict? "It makes the workshop look so much brighter and cleaner. We are over the moon with the final finish."

Bradite Floor-it is a single-pack, high performance coating ideal for general shopfloor usage. The water-based acrylic floor paint has no odour and is suitable for use on suitably prepared concrete, as well as wood, metal or asphalt surfaces. The semi-gloss finish is extremely durable with excellent adhesion.

website: www.bradite.com

New architects' support page

The interest from architects in **West Fraser** products, and the company's environmental credentials, has led to the development of a new architect-specific hub – *https://uk.westfraser.com/resources/architect-support/*. The page provides tailored information such as CPDs, downloadable product datasheets and BIM objects while the architect can also order product samples. The page is easily navigated, and provides a space for many architect-specific FAQ's. In addition, the popular RIBAJ SterlingOSB Zero annual competition has a dedicated link. The competition, which is celebrating its ten-year anniversary, with a different brief each year, has been hotly contested by some of the industry's most creative architectural practices, all vying to win the top prize of £2,500.

Intelligent new HomeHub device launched

Vericon Systems has launched HomeHub, a sophisticated in-property device that has been developed to help Housing Associations and property managers monitor and manage their resident's living environment. HomeHub, with its intuitive user-friendly touchscreen, provides real-time visibility into environmental conditions within a property, such as humidity levels and alerting residents to potential issues such as damp and mould, by assessing the risk in each room every five minutes rather than providing a general view over a 24-hour period. Thanks to its intelligent machine learning, the HomeHub system 'learns' the property's heating characteristics, enabling it to accurately calculate the time needed to achieve the desired temperature. It enables direct communication between landlords and residents, including proactive communication with residents, available in multiple languages.

Pionieer 70 from IVC Commercial

Providing 18dB of impact sound reduction in heavy duty environments, Pionieer 70 is the new acoustic flooring solution from **IVC Commercial**. With a 0.7mm wear layer and Class 34 rating, it can withstand busy environments. Anywhere there is a demand for a durable and easy to maintain finish that deals with acoustic challenges, Pionieer 70 steps up to the mark. Not only delivering excellent acoustic performance, IVC Commercial Pionieer 70 also features Invertech. This is a patented technology to enhance the floor's appearance that works with PUR Shield to improve maintenance and resistance to marks and stains. Pionieer 70 comes in 22 wood, colour and material effects to give a versatile design option.

Tile of Spain introduces its Trends Look Book for 2025

Tile of Spain is proud to unveil its 2025 lookbook, featuring exciting new launches from the Spanish tile industry designed to inspire interior designers, homeowners, and architects alike.

Tiles lend themselves perfectly to creating unique and striking visual statements. From mixing and matching different colours of the same tile, to eye-catching geometric designs, homeowners and designers have started to exude even more abstract expression through their surface choice.

In some cases, tiled surfaces will become almost kaleidoscopic in appearance, delivering a new elevated level of creativity when it comes to interior design.

A trend for more 'out of this world' finishes and colourways has started to make itself known through tile design. Otherworldly iridescent effects and decorative overlays that go beyond simple colour are set to show a significant increase in popularity.

Texture in tiles has developed further than a simple structure in the surface. Thanks to continued developments in manufacturing technologies, tile designs are increasingly presenting more depth in pattern and structure, exuding a calming, sensory effect through a very subtle sense of movement.

website: www.tileofspain.com

SFS customers commend new version of FP Visualiser

As a well-respected manufacturer of fall protection systems, and the company which created the SFS Fall Protection Installer Network, **SFS Group Fastening Technology** continues to make significant investment to support for specifiers with the launch of its new and improved SFS FP Visualizer design tool being a recent example.

Originally introduced last year as a prototype package, industry partners highlighted possible areas for improvement; namely, around the Fall Protection Visualiser software's capabilities in terms of rapidly inputting and processing project specific information. Now, SFS has relaunched the tool with a radically reconfigured portal which offers significant benefits over industry alternatives and responds to recent changes in terms of construction specifier's liabilities.

The introduction encompasses two variants to FP Visualiser, with the core tool being aimed at architects and other building specifiers, who are seeking to provide protection on their project or client property. They need have no specialist knowledge of the roofing industry and will simply be invited to input essential parameters such as the building height, roof type (e.g. composite panels), the crown centres and pitch angle. Once the details have been submitted to SFS, the user receives a notice that a full roof design document will be provided within 5-7 working days.

website: https://uk.sfs.com/

JG9

InstallerSHOW 2025 *registration is now open!*

*Building on the success of last year, **InstallerSHOW** is returning to the NEC from 24-26 June with more than 800 of the industry's biggest brands all under one roof. Spanning three halls to cater for an ever-greater range of visitors, attendees can expect discussions, demos and industry insights as well the purpose-built elemental Housing Hub and full-scale Passivhaus on site...*

Over the three days, a packed content programme of talks will be hosted across the elemental theatres, delving into key issues like decarbonisation and the role of retrofitting. Panel discussions will also be held at the elemental Housing Hub, where experts from throughout the building process will be on hand to provide insights and take questions.

At the centre of Hall 4 will be The HAUS, a full-scale Passivhaus designed by IF_DO and constructed from regenerative materials by Natural Building Systems in association with manufacturers and suppliers including Wienerberger, Egger, Hanson Plywood and Mapei. Here, architects and specifiers can source the latest information on sustainable products to inform their design and specification decisions.

InstallerSHOW 2025 will also see the launch of Building Safety Week, an industry-wide initiative, designed to engage the whole of the supply chain, with the goal of improving building safety and rebuilding trust in the construction industry.

"2025 is going to be a big year for InstallerSHOW," commented Mike Costain, managing director of Lyrical Communications. "Architects and specifiers can expect more dedicated events, more talks, more celebrity guests and more of the most important brands that are shaping the industry. All those who register for InstallerSHOW 2025 will also be entered for the chance to win the ultimate VIP experience. Keep an eye on our socials for more information in the coming weeks and months."

To sign up to InstallerSHOW 2025 for free, go to ***https://forms.reg.buzz/installer-2025-visitor/cib-release-rl-spec*** and follow InstallerSHOW on LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook and TikTok for more updates.

installer SHOW

24-26 June 25
NEC Birmingham

CHILTON WOODS
COMMUNITY HEAT

tried and tested heat network technology to drive *new home decarbonisation*

***GTC** takes a look at the role heat networks can play in decarbonising the delivery of heat and hot water into new build homes across the UK...*

The UK housing sector is a major contributor to carbon emissions, and the residential sector alone is responsible for around 20%. There is no doubt that the UK has made, and continues to make, huge strides towards its net zero goals. For housebuilding and developers this has been shaped by the rise of regulations like the Future Homes Standard and the Home Energy Model. Heat networks are proven around the world and are ready to help decarbonise the delivery of heat and hot water into UK homes.

Until recently, building regulations set a high temperature for water in properties. This meant steel pipe had to be used, which is expensive. Consequently, heat networks were used in high density sites, typically in towns and cities, as they need less heat network. Building regulations now set a lower temperature for hot water in homes, which allows the use of insulated plastic pipe. This significantly reduces the cost and means heat networks, and their proven technology, are a very competitive option for low density housing sites.

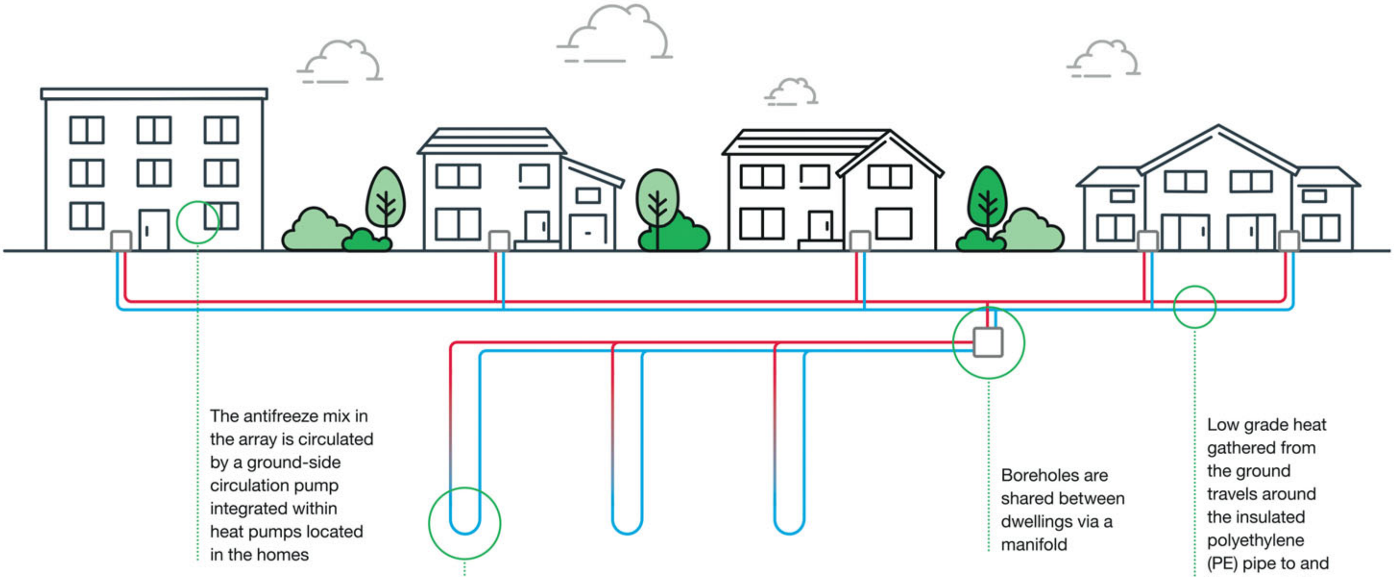
The development of heat networks for low rise, low density new build housing was informed by the decades of experience we have designing, owning and operating heat networks across London, including Wembley and King's Cross.

Years of R&D means that there is now a commercially viable heat network solution designed for low-rise, low-density schemes being rolled out across the country with several of the UK's largest housebuilders on multiple new build sites.

Community Heat Hubs use large scale air source heat pumps and thermal stores to produce hot water in the site central Heat Hub.

JG220

Networked Ground Source Heat Pumps **explained**



The antifreeze mix in the array is circulated by a ground-side circulation pump integrated within heat pumps located in the homes

Vertical boreholes (width 150mm, average depth 180-200m) with closed loop to capture low grade heat from the ground

Boreholes are shared between dwellings via a manifold

Low grade heat gathered from the ground travels around the insulated polyethylene (PE) pipe to and from boreholes to houses or apartments, this is the ambient loop

Community Heat Hubs remove the need for individual air source heat pumps to be mounted outside every home and crucially they:

- Meet Future Homes Standard, reducing carbon emissions by 75-80% from day one.
- Address grid capacity issues, using the thermal stores to flatten the site's grid demand. This significantly lowers a site's overall peak demand compared with individual air source heat pumps.
- Lower cost for house builders and lower customer bills by up 20%, compared to individual air source heat pumps.
- Will be regulated by OFGEM from 2026 offering homeowners the ultimate protection on price and service levels.

In a bid to accelerate heat network role out, it is vital that choice is offered. Community Heat Hubs are one option. Networked Ground Source Heat Pumps, launched in the last year for new build sites, are another option.

Networked Ground Source Heat Pumps work by extracting naturally occurring, stored thermal energy from the ground to provide consistent, energy-efficient heating.

The solution offers a clean alternative to gas through a ground source heat pump installed within each property, which is connected to a shared network of hidden underground pipes. The small, compact heat pump sits inside the home, saving valuable space and eliminating the need for any external kit.

Networked Ground Source Heat Pumps:

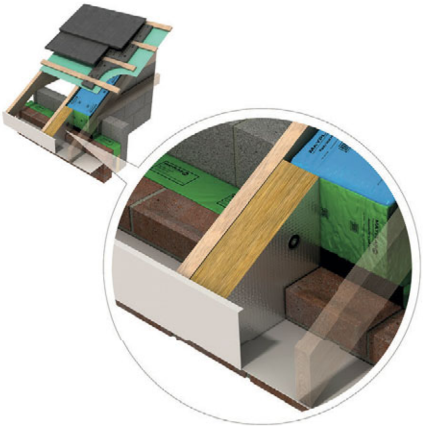
- Only need the same grid electricity capacity as homes heated by gas, removing the risk of grid capacity constraint.
- Bring a complete end-to-end heating, hot water and cooling solution. This inclusion of passive cooling helps Part L Building Regulation compliance.
- Meet Future Homes Standard, reducing carbon emissions by 75-80% from day one.
- Offer up to five times the efficiency of gas and a 30% increased efficiency than an equivalent individual air source heat pump.
- Will be regulated by OFGEM from 2026 offering homeowners the ultimate protection on price and service levels.

Both heat network solutions use the benefits of shared infrastructure and can scale to meet the heating demands of entire communities. They also offer a more efficient, centralised approach to energy generation and distribution compared to carbonised methods.

Heat networks benefit from higher efficiencies due to the stable and renewable nature of the energy sources they tap into. This centralised approach reduces transmission losses and ensures a more consistent and reliable heat supply across the network.

The Future Homes Standard contains two notional specifications: heat pumps and heat networks. Community Heat Hubs and Networked Ground Source Heat Pumps combine both solutions and will play a pivotal role in the construction of low-carbon, energy-efficient new build residential homes.

In a world where decarbonisation is no longer optional, heat networks provide a pathway to greener, more resilient housing stock. They align with both regulatory imperatives and market demand for sustainable, low-carbon solutions, making them a central pillar in the transition to a net-zero future. What's more Community Heat Hubs and Networked Ground Source Heat Pumps can deliver against these goals right now, at scale and at pace.



Mayplas adds new passive fire, acoustic and thermal products to housebuilding range

Mayplas, a specialist in passive fire protection, acoustic and thermal insulation for the housebuilding industry, has introduced three new products. The new Thermal Eaves Batt, Party Wall Head Cap System and Therma Soffit add to Mayplas' comprehensive portfolio of products for timber and masonry frame applications.

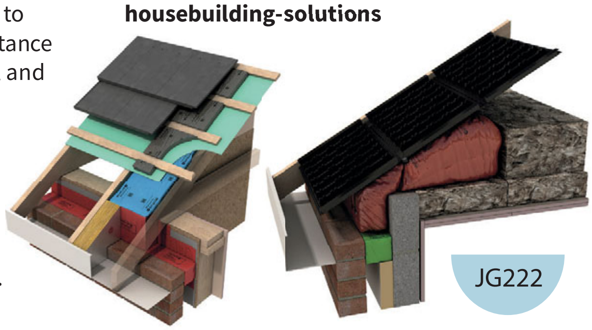
The new Mayplas Thermal Eaves Batt provides a thermal barrier at the interface between the ceiling loft space and the external wall of new build homes. Comprising two main components, an eaves tray and a stone mineral wool insulation batt, the batt prevents cold spots and reduces heat loss while providing a clear air path between the roofing membrane and insulation to avoid condensation. The batt is suitable for roof pitches up to 45°.

The new Party Wall Head System provides fire protection compartmentation at the party wall junction. Installed together as per Mayplas' Installation Guide, the two-component system – a party wall head cap and a tile batten barrier, achieves 60 minutes fire integrity and insulation tested to the principles of EN 1363-1:2012 and EOTA TR31:2008 and independently assessed in accordance with BS 476-20:1987 and BS 476-22:1987. The system addresses Building Regulations requirements to maintain the continuity of fire resistance between a compartment party wall and the underside of the roof covering, so preventing the spread of fire and smoke.

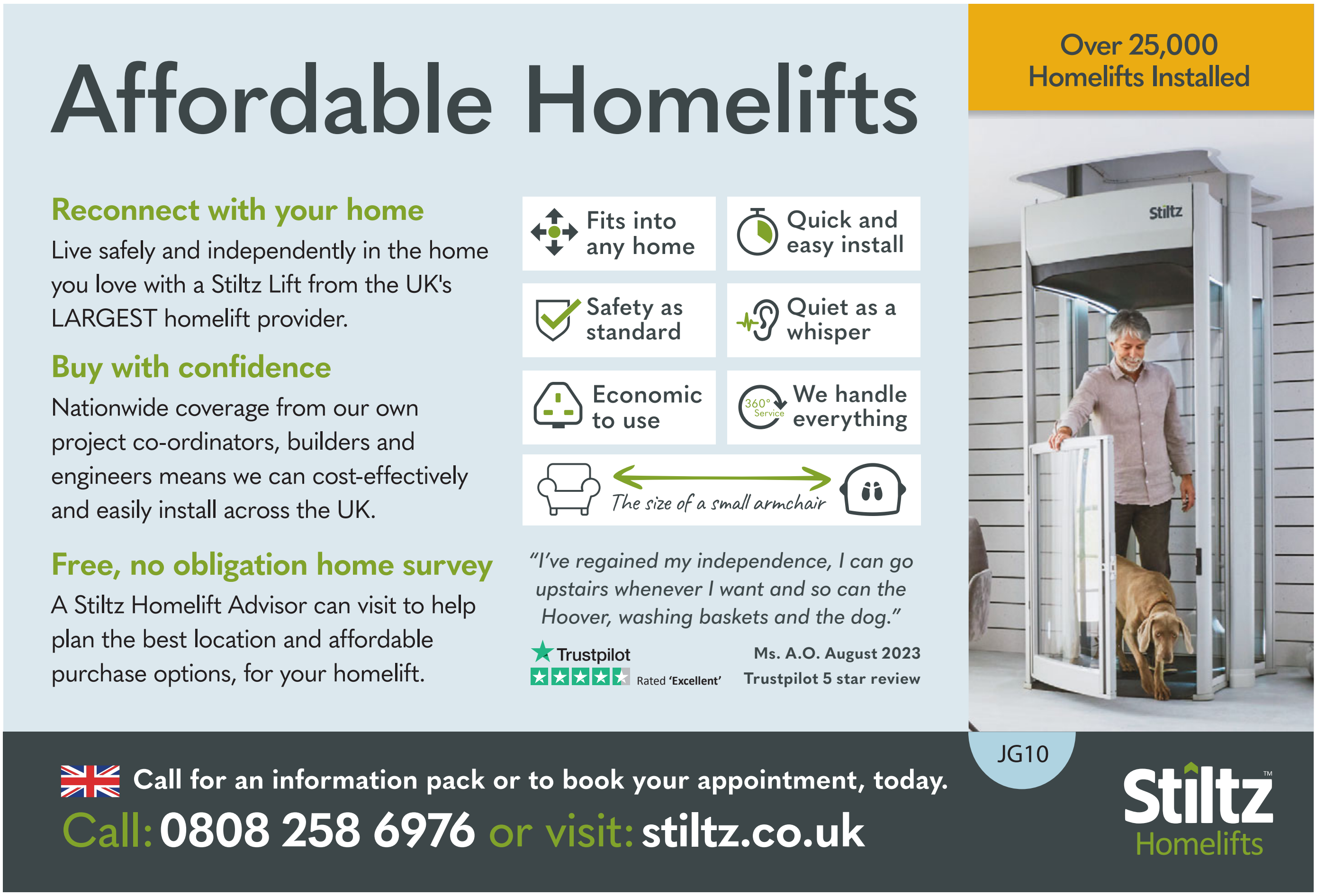
Mayplas' third new product also works at the party wall junction. The Therma Soffit provides thermal insulation within the soffit. It is available in two thicknesses, 100 and 150mm, facilitating required thermal resistance values (Approved Document L) and providing resistance to the passage of sound synonymous with stone mineral wool insulation (Approved Document E).

These new products join Mayplas' MP552 Cavity Stop Socks, MP556 Fire Stop Slab, MP551 Timber Frame Cavity Barriers and MP557 Acoustic Party Wall DPC cavity barrier, all recently tested to BS EN 1366-4:2021, to meet a wide range of housebuilders' specialist insulation needs

New technical data sheets are available at: **www.mayplas.co.uk/housebuilding-solutions**



JG222



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Ms. A.O. August 2023 Trustpilot 5 star review

JG10

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FEATURES

- ✓ A comprehensive range of single, dual and triple pump sets, with variable speed & fixed speed available
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- ✓ Easy to maintain: We offer a range of clean water maintenance packages designed for your convenience
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JG11

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Architect Tom Dowdall chose an Urban Front door in oak for Eavesdrop, winner of the RIBA Southeast Award 2024. Photography: @studiostagg

setting high standards:
a guide to passivhaus design for doors

***Elizabeth Assaf**, co-founder and designer at Urban Front, discusses the role of doors in Passivhaus specification...*

What is Passivhaus?
Passivhaus means creating a building that can maintain a pleasant temperature in winter as well as summer without a separate heating or air conditioning system. It's an environmentally friendly approach to construction – buildings account for around 35% of total global energy consumption, according to the UK's Passivhaus Trust, which adds that Passivhaus is a tried and tested solution that delivers net-zero ready new and existing buildings. And, although building to this standard may be more costly in terms of build, homeowners can expect an average annual heating bill of around £120 per year – less than one-tenth of the price most householders currently pay.

Officially, a Passivhaus property is certified by the PassivHaus Institut or an authorised UK company, although some homeowners choose to build or retrofit to Passivhaus standards (it's EnerPHit for retrofits) without applying for certification. This gives all the benefits of Passivhaus without the cost of certification and allows a little more flexibility in terms of design choices.

Photography: Matthew Smith Architectural Photography

Door design principles
1. Avoid heat loss
Airtightness is essential for a Passivhaus door because, at the end of a build or renovation, the whole building is verified with a blower test. For a Passivhaus, the maximum acceptable leakage corresponds to an hourly air change of 0.6. This means a maximum of 60% of the volume of the air in the building is allowed to leak out or in during one hour at a pressure difference between the outside and the inside. You might be surprised just how much ventilation can

Continued on page 34...

Elevate Your Interiors with the ECLISSE Flush Collection

When it comes to creating stunning, modern interiors, the devil is in the details. The ECLISSE Syntesis Flush collection offers an innovative solution that can transform any space into a masterpiece of contemporary design. This collection of Flush Pocket, Hinged and Skirting products blends functionality with aesthetics, providing a seamless integration that elevates the overall look and feel of interior designs.

The Seamless Appeal of ECLISSE Flush collection

The ECLISSE Flush collection stands out for its minimalist design, which allows doors to blend effortlessly into the wall. This seamless integration is achieved through the absence of visible door frames, architraves and skirting, creating a smooth, continuous surface. The result is a clean, uncluttered appearance that complements modern design trends and enhances any room's aesthetic.

The ECLISSE Flush products are perfect for achieving a minimalist look without compromising functionality. Whether you opt for a painted finish that matches the wall colour or choose a contrasting hue to make a statement, the ECLISSE Flush collection offers versatility and elegance.

Versatile Design Options

One of the key strengths of the ECLISSE Syntesis Flush collection is its adaptability to various interior styles. From sleek, modern apartments to classic, sophisticated homes, these doors can be customized to suit any décor. The flush hinged doors also includes options for invisible hinges, which further enhance the minimalist design and ensure a smooth, seamless appearance.

Enhancing Space and Functionality

Beyond aesthetics, the ECLISSE Flush collection offers practical benefits that make it an excellent choice for both residential and commercial spaces. ECLISSE Pocket Doors help maximize usable space and are particularly beneficial in smaller rooms where every inch counts.

Moreover, the flush design creates a clean line that can make spaces feel more open and airy. This can be especially advantageous in open-plan layouts, where visual continuity is crucial. The sleek appearance of flush doors not only enhances the room's décor but also contributes to a more harmonious and cohesive environment.

Innovative Engineering and Quality

ECLISSE is renowned for its commitment to quality and innovation, and the Flush collection is no exception. The systems are designed with durability in mind, featuring robust construction and high-quality materials that ensure long-lasting performance.

Furthermore, the ECLISSE Flush collection is designed for easy installation, making it accessible for both professional contractors and DIY enthusiasts. Comprehensive installation guides and support from ECLISSE ensure that the process is straightforward and hassle-free.

The Future of Interior Design

The ECLISSE Flush collection represents a fusion of style and functionality that is perfect for the modern era. Its ability to seamlessly integrate into any décor, combined with space-saving benefits and superior quality, makes it a standout choice for those looking to elevate their interiors.

Whether you're renovating a single room or designing an entire building, the ECLISSE Syntesis Flush collection offers a sophisticated solution that enhances both the aesthetics and usability of your space. Embrace the future of interior design with ECLISSE Flush, and transform your environment into a work of art.

www.eclisse.co.uk

ECLISSE

SLIDING POCKET DOOR SYSTEMS

This bungalow features an oak Urban Front door to provide a rich texture alongside the mellow brickwork and grey zinc roof. Photography: @studiostagg

This self-built home features a bespoke handcrafted kitchen with wood and natural materials taking centre stage, which works perfectly with the solid oak door. Photography: @studiostagg

pass through the gaps around a door. A standard door can pass 70 litres per second at a pressure differential of 15 Pa.

2. Unbroken super insulation

This high level insulation is achieved in the following ways:

- Thermal bridge-free construction – this reduces the paths of least resistance for heat flow and is a key principle of Passivhaus construction.
- High-quality triple-glazed windows – these address the first path via which heat is lost from buildings: conduction of heat through the building fabric.
- An airtight building envelope – this addresses the second path via which heat is lost from buildings: infiltration and exfiltration of air through gaps in the building envelope, (otherwise known as draughts).
- Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery – this addresses the third-way heat is lost from buildings: via the deliberate introduction of fresh air and extraction of stale air for ventilation.

Benefits of Passivhaus design

Doors made to this certification can achieve a U Value of 0.89 and higher – a standard doorset would require a U Value of 1.2. U Value measures the rate at which heat is transferred through a material. The lower the U Value, the better the material is at preventing heat loss.

In door design, a low U Value is achieved by creating a thicker than usual doorset (usually 98mm) with specialist hinges, threshold and weather sealing to reduce heat loss. To maximise effectiveness, the door frame needs to be fixed to the building envelope.

Does Passivhaus standard mean compromising on design?

Passivhaus standard doesn't mean compromising on design but there are a few things to be aware of. First, if a door meets Passivhaus standards, it means that every component must remain the same to maintain the certification. This relates to size as well as other elements such as specialist hinges. You'll also need to opt for a hinge-style door rather than a pivot, which isn't as airtight (it is weather-sealed but tiny gaps at the corners of the door will let air in and out and this would affect certification attempts).

These considerations are only an issue if you are going for official Passivhaus status. A door that is made to Passivhaus standards but not certified means more choice in terms of design and size and will still provide very high levels of air tightness.

FD30
APPROVED

FD30 Fire Rated Door Solutions from Rocket Door Frames

Rocket Door Frames' space saving pocket door kits have proved very successful in the UK over the last five years. The ease of installation of the 100% steel frame has made them attractive to architects, builders and keen DIYers alike. Rocket's ultra flush door product without the architrave is also popular, particularly with interior designers looking to make a visual impact in home and commercial spaces. That's great but is it enough?

Fire safety has never been more important in the minds of customers when making a purchase. The fire resistance of these door systems is a question our team is increasingly asked about and is something we take very seriously. To illustrate this Rocket put its door products through rigorous independent fire safety testing to prove their suitability.

Rocket's pocket door kits are made from steel

Tested by the UKAS-accredited Warringtonfire laboratory, the Rocket pocket door and ultra flush concealed door systems both obtained a full 30-minute rating, known as FD30. This means the kits can be safely used with most standard doors with the Rocket pocket frame, or doors supplied by Rocket for its concealed door product.

In the pocket door assessment, Rocket's system was fitted with a flaxboard core door, one of the most onerous of all the fire door cores. This was done for the customer's peace of mind; if the most basic door passed the test, they knew they had a product they could trust.

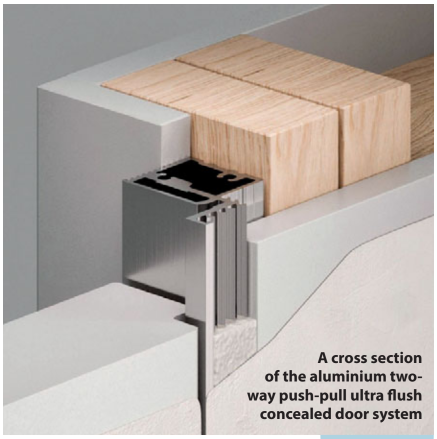
Following the FD30 test, Rocket actually achieved an impressive 48 minutes of protection. That is 60% more than the requirement for full approval.

The Pocket Jamb Lining

A jamb is essentially a timber lining kit fitted after the door is installed to cover the top of the door and running mechanism. This lines the metal entrance verticals to the pocket for a clean and professional look.

Rocket's fire door jamb (pictured right) is made from a high density, slow burning European oak providing a strong and stable finish. Another advantage is that this jamb does not have flat architraves integrated into the system.

The quality of the Rocket jamb system easily passed the fire test without the need for architraves. This means you can specify the same architraves throughout a development and not be constrained by the jamb design.



A cross section of the aluminium two-way push-pull ultra flush concealed door system

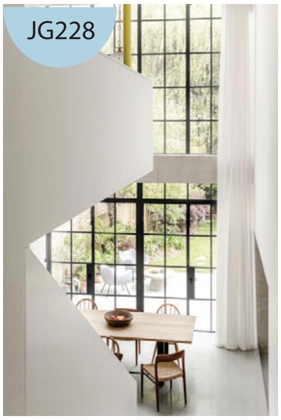
JG13

Availability and Delivery

When selecting a Rocket FD30 door system a full fire jamb set is included as well as all the intumescent strips required. All the main standard British sizes are stocked items and can be delivered in a matter of days to anywhere in the UK.

0330 9980617
info@rocketdoorframes.co.uk
www.rocketdoorframes.co.uk

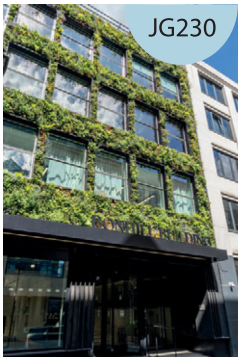
Rocket Door Frames



Steel window subtlety

Manufactured to the highest standards and to exact specifications, **Fabco** windows are both practical and aesthetically pleasing. All come with a certified A-thermal rating as standard. Steel windows have the slimmest of sightlines allowing maximum light into your home. A range of styles is available from cutting-edge to traditional. The W20 series of steel window sections is the most popular and diverse steel framing system available. The SMW series of steel window sections are the oldest steel window sections currently available. Used extensively throughout the last century, the section is commonly associated as the classic steel window seen on thousands of buildings nationwide. Image: French & Tye

Abseiling and anti-social hours all part of the ASWS armoury



As an experienced specialist in the art of steel and aluminium window refurbishment, **Associated Steel Window Services (ASWS)**, makes use of multiple skills to ensure the fulfilment of clients' ambitions. One such project was carried out in London's Shoreditch 'Tech City' district where ASWS had to work outside of working hours to address some challenging problems affecting relatively modern W40 windows; and utilise its abseiling team. Managing Director at ASWS, Laura Mercer, said: "The in-situ installed W40 gaskets back in the 80's and 90's were not vulcanised and tended to break down quite quickly, which has required a complicated technique to replace them. What we do to mitigate the problem now is to top cap them both inside and out, which offers a far more effective and enduring seal."

W20 windows and doors made clear with SWA's new fact sheet

The Steel Window Association has developed a series of informative fact sheets; all can be viewed which can be downloaded at www.steel-window-association.co.uk. The latest is the W20 which has been compiled by the industry's experts. Focusing on the versatility, and evolution, of the established W20 system, the new fact sheet addresses current building regulations and helps the many companies in the steel window industry provide the very best modern service in the UK's fast-moving construction industry.

JG14
WARWICK CASTLE
HOTEL
WOODLAND
MEDIEVAL
GLAMPING

TORMAX delivers modern access to castle hotel

Opened in the summer of 2024, Warwick Castle Hotel lies in the heart of the 64-acre grounds, with over 60 medieval-themed rooms. Door automation expert **TORMAX** worked with main contractor RED Construction Group to deliver an entrance solution that welcomes guests into the impressive reception, with a combination of two sets of bi-parting automatic sliding doors.

Powered by two TORMAX iMotion 2202.A door drives, the busy entrance system is engineered for longevity and low maintenance. All in-house designed iMotion drives feature AC motor technology that has none of the parts that generally wear out. Combined with a state-of-the-art microprocessor control system, iMotion delivers market-leading reliability for door automation.

Energy saving, the iMotion range of door drives deliver rapid response to approaching pedestrians, minimising heat loss.

email: sales@tormax.co.uk web: www.tormax.co.uk

Door & Hardware Federation hails Members' Conference 2025, 'a great success'

The Door & Hardware Federation (DHF) recently held its Members' Conference at the Royal Airforce Museum Cosford, and welcomed 200 members and industry professionals for a day of knowledge sharing, networking, and innovation.

The highly enjoyable day featured a number of workshops including Dafydd Williams, from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, who spoke about the government response to Grenfell; Neil Rule, managing director at Access2, who spoke about the update to the standard, TS 007-1; and Gillian McAteer, director of employment law at Citation, who spoke on navigating employment law.

The exhibition provided a valuable platform for networking, collaboration and knowledge exchange.

website: www.dhfonline.org.uk

Introducing Consort Claudgen's new Commercial Fan Heater

CONSORT
JG232

Consort Claudgen's new CFH3 Commercial Fan Heater has been designed for efficient heating in workshops, garages, and commercial spaces. Rated at 3kW, it offers one fan speed, three heat settings, and a fan-only mode. With the HRXSL controller, users can set up to six daily programs and 7-day scheduling for energy efficiency. Multiple heaters can be controlled together for larger spaces. The heater features multi-directional brackets, allowing 180° horizontal and 45° vertical adjustment for targeted heating. Finished in sleek matt black, the CFH3 combines functionality with style.

Hamworthy Heating launches its latest air source heat pump CPD module

Hamworthy Heating is pleased to announce it has expanded its CIBSE-accredited CPD portfolio with the launch of its latest module – 'Considerations for air source heat pump selection, specification and system design'. Designed for anyone involved in plant room design, the module is divided into four easy-to-digest segments and provides valuable information on selecting and sizing air source heat pumps (ASHP) for both new and existing commercial buildings. Beginning with an introduction to the main driving forces behind air source heat pumps, the CPD discusses the various influencing factors to consider when specifying a heat pump. Designed to offer guidance, participants can learn more about the process of sizing air source heat pumps according to their design, load and intended use.

dMEV-NICO from Domus Ventilation: effective energy efficient ventilation

JG234
domus

Mechanical extract fans are an effective form of ventilation that use very little energy, although the Specific Fan Power (SFP) is something to consider. **Domus Ventilation** designs its fans with a low as possible SFP to optimise energy efficiency, especially when it comes to continuous running extract fans. Domus Ventilation's dMEV-NICO has a very low SFP figure of between 0.16–0.28w/l/s. Designed for new build properties, to remove waste and moist air from a single wet room, such as bathrooms and kitchens, dMEV-NICO provides a cost effective extract solution that has been built to achieve the ventilation rates as set out in the latest edition of Part F and L Building Regulations. It has low life cycle and maintenance costs, is virtually silent in operation, and has a modern, unobtrusive aesthetic that makes it suitable for all styles of home.

JG235
ideal
EVOMAX 2
10 YEAR WARRANTY
NOW AVAILABLE

New10-year warranty on Evomax 2 boiler

Evomax 2, the commercial wall-mounted boiler from **Ideal Heating Commercial**, is now available with a 10-year warranty.

As with all Ideal Heating Commercial condensing boilers, Evomax 2 is designed specifically for the UK market, and produced in a state-of-the-art manufacturing plant in Hull which has seen considerable investment over recent years.

The new warranty covers 10-year parts and labour when Evomax 2 is installed on an Ideal Heating pipework header kit with plate heat exchanger, and commissioned by Ideal Heating Commercial. Commissioning is provided as a free service and not only saves installers time and money, but ensures that the boiler is operating correctly before it is put into service. An Enhanced Appliance and Primary System Check, which is chargeable at £250 per boiler, is also required under the terms and conditions of the 10-year warranty.

The new 10-year warranty does not affect the existing 5-year warranty proposition, which will continue to be available with free commissioning.

Highly efficient, Evomax 2 has up to 99.6% full load efficiency and up to 110% part load efficiency, can operate at up to 30° Δ T, and boasts a high turndown of 5:1. NOx <40mg/kWh (Class 6) is achieved for all Evomax 2 natural gas boilers, for low emissions.

website: idealcommercialheating.com

Gilberts proves how to balance cost-effective restoration

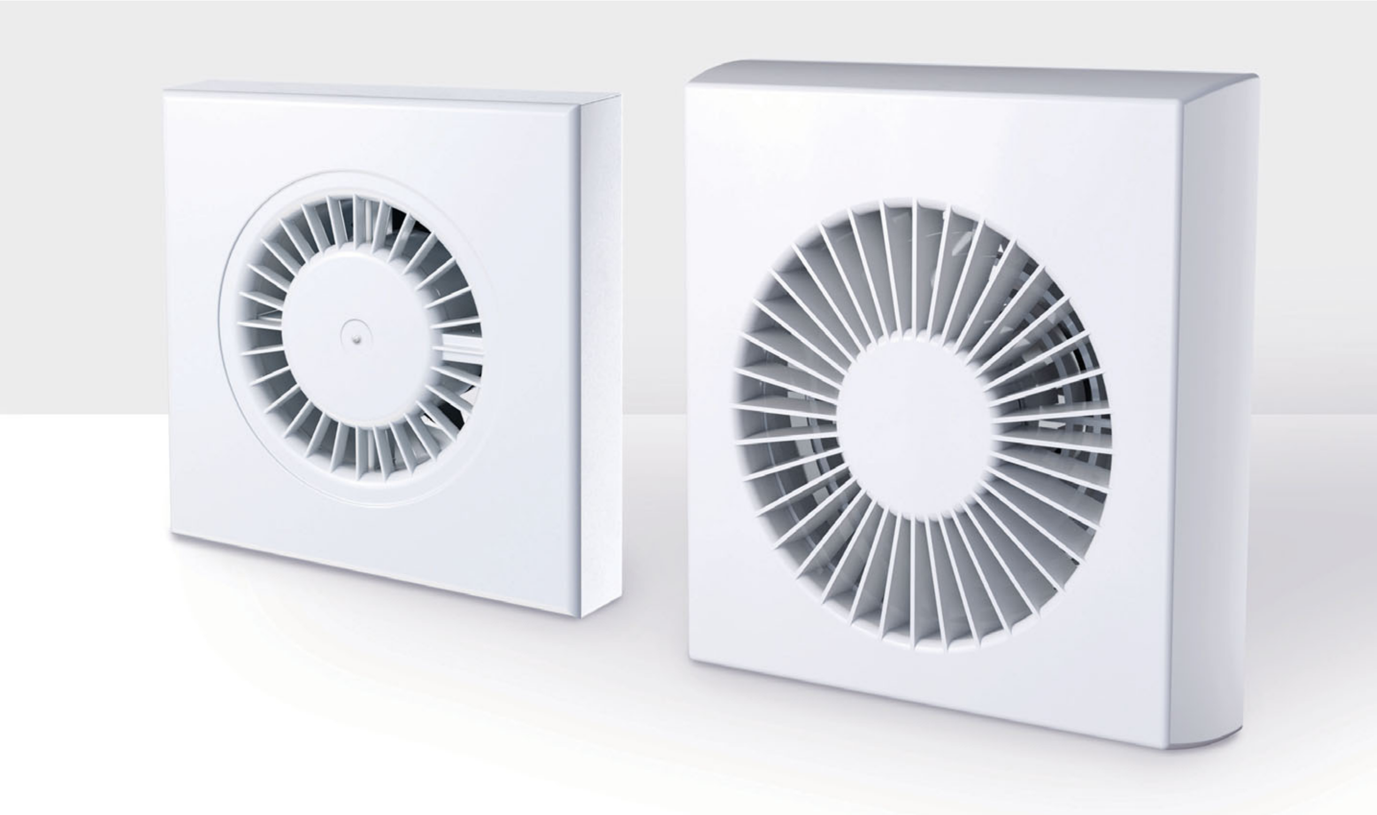
The New Victoria was the largest "picture palace" outside of London when it opened in 1930. Having closed its doors in 2000, the derelict building was facing demolition. It is being revitalised by Bradford Live into a modern, low carbon entertainment space with emphasis on retaining as much of the original interior décor as possible.

As far as possible, air distribution was to be concealed behind the existing decorative elements, and to use existing ducting paths, albeit refurbished to modern standards, to minimise impact on the historic aesthetic elements.

Gilberts Blackpool was called upon to fulfil the discreet delivery and exhaust of air to ensure compliant ambient temperature and indoor air quality even when filled to capacity. Gilberts provided a raft of grilles and diffusers, including bespoke variations to enhance their intrinsic performance within the confines of the existing building fabric.

In the ballroom, Gilberts' drum louvres have been installed, mounted 9m above the floor behind lattice style panelling in the ceiling. The bar area features Gilberts' jet nozzles in purpose-designed banks of three. In the main theatre, Gilberts' drum louvres achieve the air circulation, supported by fixed and adjustable grilles for supply and extract.

website: https://gilbertsblackpool.com



extract fans: *the unsung hero*

***Paul Williams,** Domus Ventilation product manager, looks at how to select and install a domestic extract fan to ensure high performance and longevity...*

The humble mechanical extract fan: the unsung hero of the ventilation market when compared to whole house ventilation systems. Yet choosing the right extract fan is essential if it is to perform to the desired standard and to meet Building Regulations Part F Ventilation.

Types of extract fans

There are two types of intermittent extract fans to choose from – axial and centrifugal – both of which are suitable for use in wet rooms, including bathrooms, toilets, kitchens, utility rooms and ensuites.

WARNING: DISCONNECT POWER BEFORE REMOVING COVER

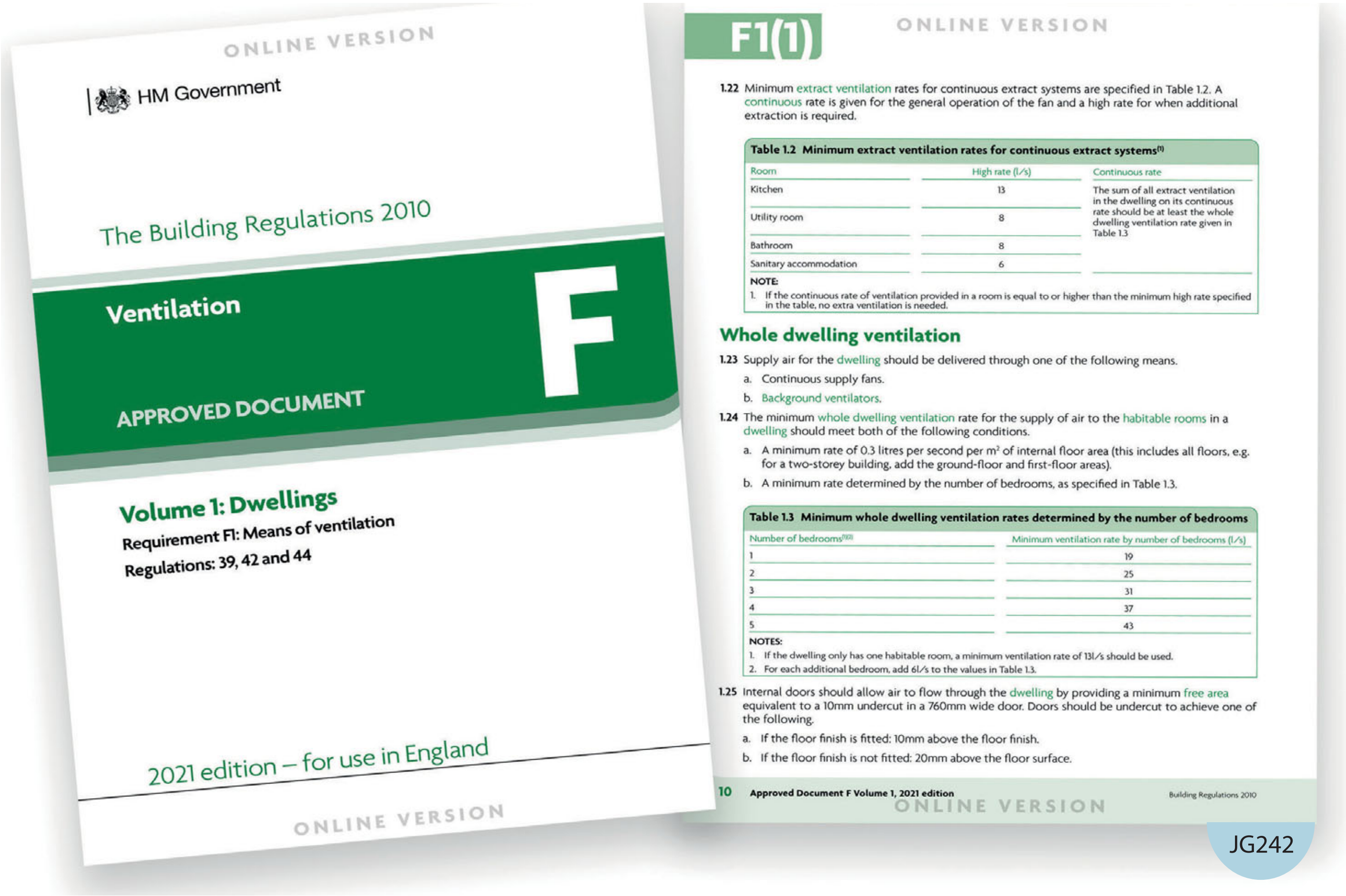
The simplest to install, axial fans are designed to work with short duct runs, typically no more than 1.5m, which connect directly to an external outlet or grille. Most kitchens and bathrooms with an external wall are suitable for axial fans. Axial fans are the lower cost option.

Where longer duct runs are necessary, often because the room to be ventilated is in the centre of the house, centrifugal fans are the preferred option as they produce more pressure to overcome resistance encountered in longer duct runs – normally up to a maximum run of 6m. Typically, they are quieter than axial fans, so may be a better option for ensuites.

In addition to standard centrifugal and axial fans, there are also duct-mounted inline fans which come in both formats, as well as mixed flow models which are most frequently used in longer duct runs up to 6m. Inline fans are not installed within the room itself – frequently in the ceiling void or attic – but are connected to the room via ducting mounted with a decorative grille at the end. This makes them ideal for installation in splash zones. As installation of inline fans requires longer ducting, they are mostly used in new builds and major refurbishment projects.

Selecting the right fan

Domestic extract fans come in two sizes: 100 and 150mm As you would expect, the larger fans are for larger bathrooms



ONLINE VERSION

HM Government

The Building Regulations 2010

Ventilation

F

APPROVED DOCUMENT

Volume 1: Dwellings

Requirement F1: Means of ventilation

Regulations: 39, 42 and 44

2021 edition – for use in England

ONLINE VERSION

F1(1)

ONLINE VERSION

1.22 Minimum extract ventilation rates for continuous extract systems are specified in Table 1.2. A continuous rate is given for the general operation of the fan and a high rate for when additional extraction is required.

Table 1.2 Minimum extract ventilation rates for continuous extract systems[1]

Room	High rate (l/s)	Continuous rate
Kitchen	13	The sum of all extract ventilation in the dwelling on its continuous rate should be at least the whole dwelling ventilation rate given in Table 1.3
Utility room	8	
Bathroom	8	
Sanitary accommodation	6	

NOTE:

1. If the continuous rate of ventilation provided in a room is equal to or higher than the minimum high rate specified in the table, no extra ventilation is needed.

Whole dwelling ventilation

1.23 Supply air for the dwelling should be delivered through one of the following means.

a. Continuous supply fans.

b. Background ventilators.

1.24 The minimum whole dwelling ventilation rate for the supply of air to the habitable rooms in a dwelling should meet both of the following conditions.

a. A minimum rate of 0.3 litres per second per m^2 of internal floor area (this includes all floors, e.g. for a two-storey building, add the ground-floor and first-floor areas).

b. A minimum rate determined by the number of bedrooms, as specified in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Minimum whole dwelling ventilation rates determined by the number of bedrooms

Number of bedrooms[1][2]	Minimum ventilation rate by number of bedrooms (l/s)
1	19
2	25
3	31
4	37
5	43

NOTES:

1. If the dwelling only has one habitable room, a minimum ventilation rate of 13l/s should be used.
2. For each additional bedroom, add 6l/s to the values in Table 1.3.

1.25 Internal doors should allow air to flow through the dwelling by providing a minimum free area equivalent to a 10mm undercut in a 760mm wide door. Doors should be undercut to achieve one of the following.

a. If the floor finish is fitted: 10mm above the floor finish.

b. If the floor finish is not fitted: 20mm above the floor surface.

10 **Approved Document F Volume 1, 2021 edition** ONLINE VERSION Building Regulations 2010

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(typically greater than $9m^2$), but would also be beneficial in heavy usage bathrooms and those where there is no natural ventilation.

As well as size, the fan's performance needs to be taken into account. Measured in litres per second (l/s) or metres cubed per hour (m3/hr), the air extraction rate is vital. To meet Building Regulations, the minimum extraction rate for a bathroom extractor fan is 15l/s. Domus Ventilation fans are all Building Regulations compliant, with extract volumes up to 48.8l/s for axial fans. Ultimately, when choosing your fan, refer to the manufacturer's performance curve, which shows the relationship between the static pressure capabilities of a fan compared to its extraction rate, plus pressure loss in ducting, to determine the final extraction rate.

Get in Control

We have carried out research into which are the most popular control options and they are at the opposite end of the market financially. The basic timer and pull cord model remains popular as a cost-effective option, whilst the more advanced fans with humidistat or combined humidistat and timer that react to a significant change in humidity, are prevalent in higher end properties. Domus Ventilation's new intermittent axial fan range – the DBF100 100mm fan and the DKF150 150mm fan – are available in with these different control options.

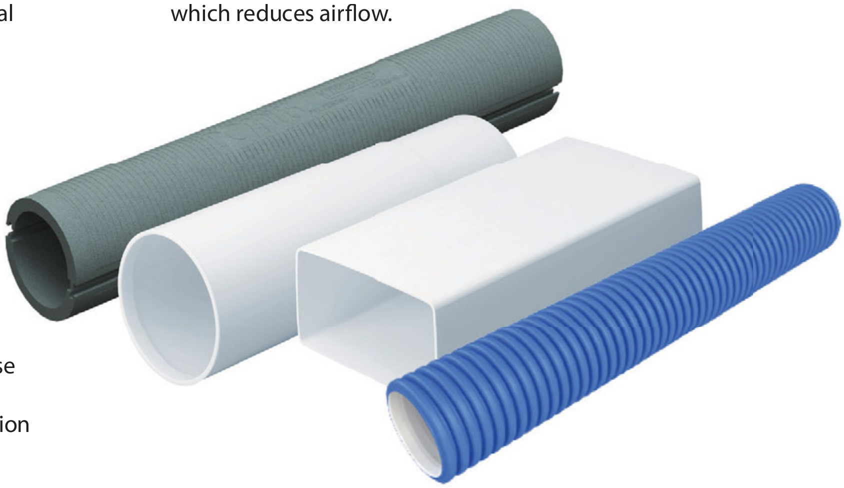
PIR based controls that activate the fan on the detection of movement are also available, but are less popular.

Avoid common mistakes

The biggest error we see when it comes to extract fans is not the fan directly, but the ducting, which can make or break any ventilation system.

Use rigid, not flexible ducting which causes a lot more air resistance and can be damaged easily. Be sure to use the correct ducting size: if the fan has 150mm diameter spigot, use 150mm ducting. Both flexible ducting and incorrectly sized ducting will also lead to a much noisier fan than is necessary. In a similar vein, ensure you have the appropriately sized tile vent.

Also, when it comes to ducting, it's best practice to keep ducting as short and straight as possible as ducting creates air resistance, which reduces airflow.



JG237

Whole-house ventilation system for Cornish eco home

National Ventilation has designed and supplied a whole-house ventilation system to an architect-built five-bedroom eco home in St Ives, Cornwall. Throughout the ventilation design and installation, the company worked closely with developer Evo Homes, who also benefitted from National Ventilation's pre-install site visit, site support service, training, and technical support from start to finish.

The detached family home is being built for a private client and features a Vent-Axia Sentinel Kinetic High Flow mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) unit, specified and supplied by National Ventilation, combined with an air source heat pump and solar panels to help achieve a comfortable EPC A-rated home.

Low carbon and energy efficient, the Sentinel Kinetic High Flow MVHR is ideal for larger homes and offers a whole building heat recovery system combining supply and extract ventilation in one unit. Alongside this, radial ducting was installed on the project, which offers simplified installation thanks to easy push-and-click fittings. The ducting is also easy to hide within a building. Furthermore, the design incorporated acoustic lined manifold boxes with an inline attenuator, which National Ventilation specifies as standard, to minimise break-out noise.

website: www.nationalventilation.co.uk

DAB launches the 'plug and play' EVOPLUS LITE

evoplus LITE
DAB
JG238

DAB Pumps has launched the EVOPLUS LITE, an advanced wet rotor electronic circulator designed to enhance efficiency, reliability and comfort in residential and commercial heating, cooling, and domestic hot water systems. Engineered for plug-and-play installation, the quick-connect power supply with superseal technology makes wiring fast and hassle-free, reducing installation time on-site.

Ideal for large residential buildings, apartment blocks, offices, schools, hospitals and commercial properties, the EVOPLUS LITE delivers adaptive, high-efficiency performance while minimising energy consumption and operating costs. Its sensorless motor control and dedicated 32-bit processor optimise performance in real time, ensuring that energy is only used when needed.

The EVOPLUS LITE operates seamlessly in both heating and cooling systems. It dynamically adjusts to fluctuating demand, preventing energy waste in heating applications while maintaining stable operation in air-conditioning systems, even when condensation forms on the pump exterior. The EVOPLUS LITE SAN variant, featuring a bronze pump casing, is designed for Domestic Hot Water recirculation, using a constant-temperature mode to deliver hot water efficiently without the need for thermostatic valves.

website: https://uk.dabpumps.com/

JG239

UK falling behind on heat pump targets – Intatec CEO Stuart Gizzi calls for policy certainty after CCC report

The Climate Change Committee's (CCC) latest report highlights a concerning reality: the UK is lagging in its transition to sustainable home heating. Without urgent government intervention, the nation's targets risk becoming unattainable. The report identifies several obstacles to scaling up heat pump installations, with policy uncertainty being paramount. It is imperative that the government commits to a clear and consistent strategy.

Prolonged policy fluctuations and ambiguous directives have deterred business investments, left installers uncertain about their career trajectories, and confused homeowners about their choices. The CCC rightly advocates for decisive action. Business thrives on stability; however, current recommendations may be rendered obsolete with shifting policies. The National Audit Office (NAO) has identified policy ambiguity as a significant factor hindering the adoption of heat pumps.

Without a definitive governmental roadmap, the industry's capacity to meet its objectives remains compromised.

A critical challenge is the shortage of qualified installers. The Heat Pump Association reports that, as of 2023, approximately 4,543 full-time equivalent (FTE) heat pump engineers are active in the UK.

To achieve the government's goal of 600,000 installations annually by 2028, this workforce must expand significantly. Projections indicate that at least 41,000 engineers will be required by 2030, escalating to over 122,000 by 2035. This necessitates training a minimum of 4,500 new installers each year.

Installers face considerable challenges in upskilling. Training programmes are costly, reduce billable hours, and come at a time when employment expenses are escalating. Many small enterprises and independent installers are hesitant to invest in new competencies amidst uncertain governmental support for heat pumps. Moreover, while increasing the number of heat pump specialists is vital, it is equally important to preserve traditional skills essential for system maintenance, balancing, and hybrid solutions.

Without clear legislative frameworks and incentives, installers remain apprehensive about retraining, and businesses are reluctant to allocate resources to training initiatives. For large-scale heat pump adoption, governmental clarity is urgently needed.

I urge policymakers to cease delays, establish a definitive strategy, and adhere to it. This will empower businesses to invest confidently and provide installers with assurance of stable career prospects.

The heating industry also bears responsibility. Installers should proactively seek upskilling opportunities and invest in apprenticeships, ensuring the coexistence of both traditional and emerging heating technologies in the UK market.

website: www.intatec.co.uk

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JG15

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the evolution *of the bathroom*

***Ben Bryden,** sales and marketing director at RAK Ceramics UK talks to ABC+D about the sanitaryware and storage trends set to influence bathroom interiors in 2025 and beyond. ..*

A far cry from the utilitarian designs of the past, bathrooms have evolved in recent years to become stylish, spa-like sanctuaries. It's a trend that shows no sign of slowing down with design-led sanitaryware and statement storage setting the scene in residential and commercial bathrooms.

Personalised design

Luxury finishes are becoming more popular in the bathroom thanks to their ability to add personality and style to interiors. It's a look that is gaining momentum with interesting colours and finishes, such as brushed metallics, influencing basin design as vanity units increasingly become the focal point of the bathroom.

In line with the move towards coloured taps and showers, brushed metallic basins add interest and luxury to the bathroom while injecting a unique look and feel. Crafted to redefine bathroom elegance, RAK-Ingot washbasins come in three exquisite finishes: Matt Black, Brushed Nickel and Brushed Brass and four distinct shapes – oval, rectangle, round, and square – allowing designers to create individualised spaces.

Coloured sanitaryware

There's been a move away from all-white bathrooms as interest in coloured sanitaryware has soared. While neutral-coloured baths, basins and WCs can bring a tranquil ambience, bolder shades add more depth and visual appeal to bathroom schemes. Black is a colour that simply never goes out of fashion and matt black basins, WCs and baths are really ticking all the right boxes.

Featuring fluid lines inspired by geometric swirls and changing shapes like clouds to produce a soft enveloping effect, RAK-Cloud is available in a chic matt black finish. Fashionable yet timeless in its simplicity, this striking finish can be used as an accent colour on basins, WCs and baths or co-ordinated for maximum effect.

Offset storage

Staggered storage is practical and pleasing to the eye and can create a real feature out of basins and vanity units, which is making it a popular choice with designers looking

Continued on page 44...

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JG18

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to combine style with functionality. Great for adding visual interest, RAK-Plano is a one-piece vanity top, which offers flexibility and freedom when it comes to the positioning of washbasins and mixers.

Elegant, durable and practical, it is available in a variety of sizes and finishes to suit every style of bathroom and can be combined with numerous furniture options. Above, the 800mm wall-mounted single-drawer RAK-Joy unit has been extended with an open storage unit and looks particularly striking next to the RAK-Precious Counter Wash basin in Carrara, which has been offset for added architectural appeal.

Open and closed storage

There's been a distinct move towards bathroom furniture that combines open and closed elements thanks to its ability to provide the best of both worlds. Infinitely practical, drawers and cupboards are vital for keeping bathroom essentials close at hand and maintaining a tidy, streamlined aesthetic while open storage provides a place for homeowners to showcase more decorative items.

From a visual perspective, wall-hung vanity units that combine open and closed storage also create the illusion of space and enhance their light, airy floating effect. As consumers increasingly take a more personalised approach to bathroom design, we expect to see designers utilising open and closed storage in ever more creative ways.

Niche solutions

As demand for spa-style bathrooms continues to grow, seamless storage solutions have become a bigger trend with recessed shelving and shower niches appealing to more homeowners. The latest launches utilise every inch of space and are designed to provide sleek, modern storage that is as functional as it is elegant, particularly when illuminated to enhance the luxurious effect.

The new RAK-Ingot stainless steel recessed niches come in Black, Brushed, Brass, and Brushed Nickel finishes and are perfect for organising toiletries, candles, and decorative items, while effortlessly complementing RAK Ceramics' washbasins from the same collection.

They come in sizes of 30 x 30cm, 30 x 60cm, 30 x 60cm with a dividing shelf, 30 x 120cm, and 30x120cm with two dividing shelves, and are easy to clean and maintain.

JG244

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The latest trends in accessible bathrooms

In an era where inclusivity and comfort are essential, accessible bathroom designs have evolved to meet the needs of all users, no matter their age or ability. Fitzroy of London unveils the latest trends shaping the future of accessible bathroom designs in hotels, hospitality and residential settings. These trends are not just functional, but also aesthetically pleasing, ensuring that every bathroom can be a sanctuary of style, safety and accessibility.

Universally inclusive design

Universal design is a growing trend in bathroom design, and it's becoming an essential aspect of any modern bathroom. The focus is on creating spaces that are accessible, functional and comfortable for people of all abilities and ages, ensuring that everyone can use the bathroom with ease and dignity. Inclusive design is also no longer solely about functionality, it also takes beauty and aesthetics into consideration, with many designers creating bathrooms which don't look institutional or sterile.

Stylish grabrails and supportive accessories

Incorporating stylish grab rails and supportive accessories are another increasingly popular trend in bathroom design. No longer clinical-looking, grab bars are now available in sleek finishes, such as matt black and brushed brass, which instantly complement contemporary interiors and when not being used for accessibility purposes can double up as a stylish towel rack. With designers making conscious decisions to incorporate these elements into their designs, bathrooms are becoming more inclusive, safer and visually appealing for all users.

Level-access showers including zero thresholds

Level-access showers, including zero-threshold showers are a key trend in modern bathrooms, offering a barrier-free entry that enhances safety and convenience. By eliminating steps or raised edges, they allow easy wheelchair access and reduce the risk of tripping. Combining modern aesthetics with functionality, zero-threshold showers create a spacious and seamless look, making them an ideal choice for both accessibility and contemporary bathroom design. Shower seats can be designed to blend seamlessly into the overall design. Non-slip flooring is also imperative for the safety of all users, but particularly those who have difficulty standing.

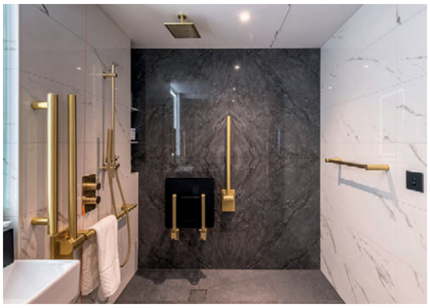
Contrasting colours and textures

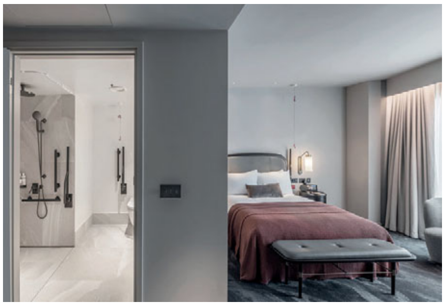
Accessible bathrooms were once merely an afterthought when it came to their style and appearance, with most designers only focusing on their functionality. Whilst this plays an integral role, designers are beginning to prioritise the style and aesthetics of the space too. Whether in a residential, commercial or hospitality environment, bold contrasts and textured elements are known for improving the visual clarity for users with low vision, whilst glossy finishes will help to create depth and interest.

Adjustable and smart features

The rise of adjustable and customisable features in today's bathroom will help to enhance comfort, independence and style for all its users. Removable grab rails, shower seats and showerheads, height-adjustable worktops, sinks, and mirrors can cater to various mobility needs and bring flexibility to a design space. Smart, hands-free taps and shower controls also offer both functionality and subtle elegance whilst prioritising hygienic practises and inclusivity. With bathroom designs evolving with changing needs, it is possible to maintain a modern and sophisticated aesthetic which works for all.

website: www.fitzroyoflondon.com





The EVO collection from JTP

Renowned for its premium bathroom hardware offering, **JTP** continues to set the standard with its popular EVO collection. Featuring five luxurious finishes – Brass, Bronze, Brushed Black, Matt Black and Chrome – the collection offers unparalleled versatility for modern and timeless bathroom spaces alike. The comprehensive range includes basin mixers, basins, shower outlets, radiators and a variety of matching accessories, including towel rails and robe hooks, providing the ultimate solution for creating a cohesive and sophisticated bathroom aesthetic.

Showersave supports industry leaders in addressing Part L and Part G regulations

Showersave recently sponsored and participated in a Building Insights LIVE roundtable on 'Water & Energy Saving Innovations in New Build Housing', focusing on energy-saving solutions to meet the Future Homes Standard and recent updates to Parts L and G of Building Regulations, aligned with the UK's water and carbon-saving goals. As global water demand is projected to exceed supply by 40% by 2030 and with the UK committed to net-zero carbon by 2050, the roundtable explored solutions to help the UK meet these targets. In line with these requirements, Showersave's Waste Water Heat Recovery System (WWHRS) has been recognised by the BRE in both SAP and SBEM as one of the most sustainable, cost-effective ways to achieve Part L compliance. Each Showersave unit recovers up to 60% of heat energy from wastewater, saving between 250 and 1,000kg of CO_2 annually.

Old values, new aesthetic

Villa Schjøtt nestles in the heart of the Paradis district in Bergen. Designed by the Norwegian architect Geir Grung, the villa is characterized by clear geometric lines, large glass panels and a fluid interplay of interior and exterior areas. The sensitive renovation by Michelsens retained the original character while upgrading the building in line with contemporary living standards. In keeping with the stylish Japandi furnishings, the interior designers opted for the **Duravit** ranges Zencha, ME by Starck, and C.1 for the bathroom renovation. Michelsens deliberately made the most of the existing architecture especially in the master bathroom. The result: an impressive view from every functional area. The centerpiece is the freestanding Zencha bathtub complemented by the floor-mounted C.1 bath mixer.

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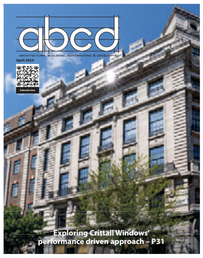
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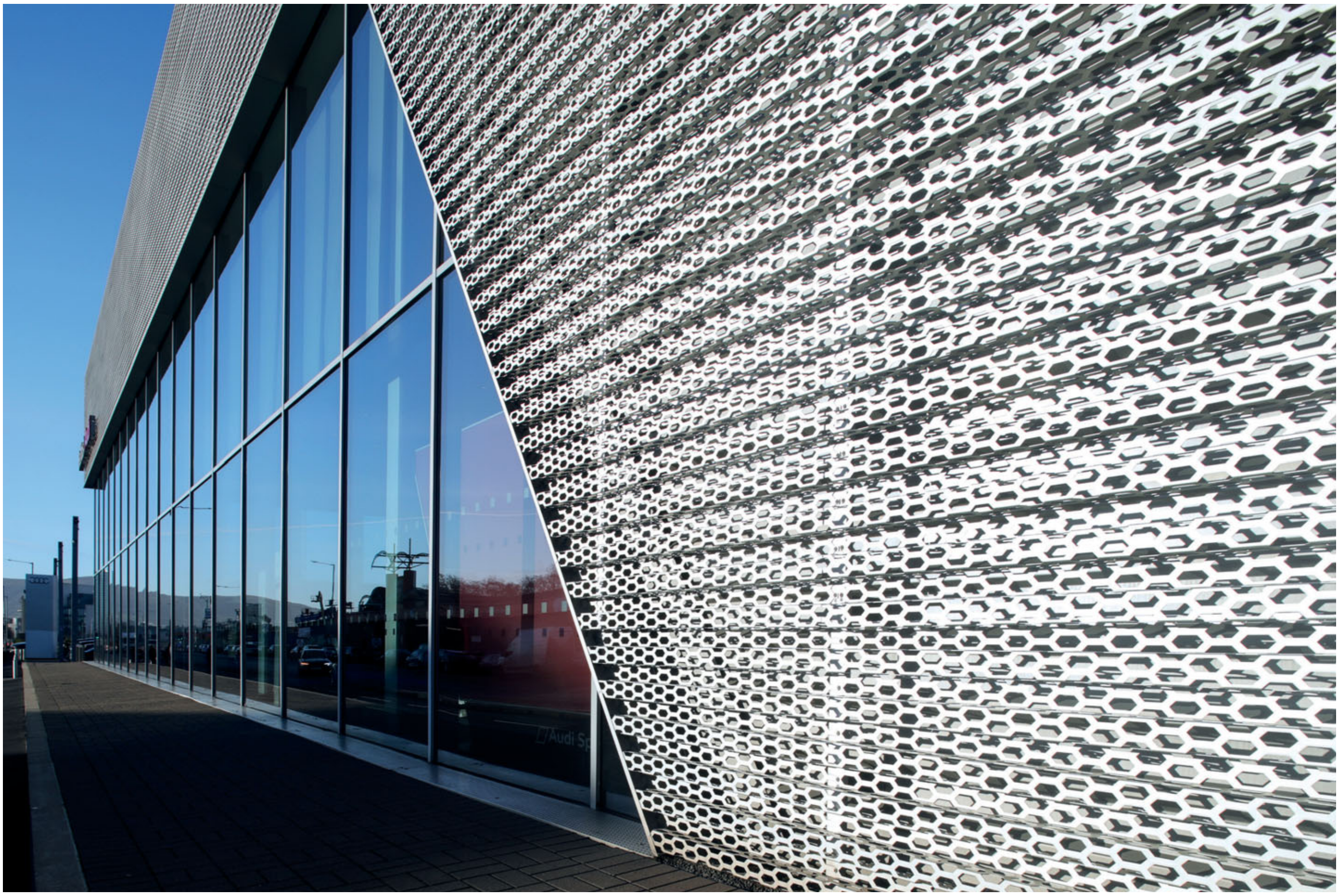


the digital transformation of cladding design *and manufacturing*

*In this article, **David Clark,** MD of metal rainscreen specialist Spanwall Façades, looks at its award-winning approach to digital technology and how it has transformed efficiency and collaboration with specifiers and contractors...*

Digital construction is not new and programmes such as AutoCAD and BIM systems have been widely used for a number of years in all aspects of architecture and construction.

Since it was established in the 1960s, Spanwall has specialised in producing bespoke sheet metal products for more challenging façade projects – such as the Titanic Building in Belfast and iconic architecture around the world.

With demand now increasing for standardised metal rainscreen systems, particularly for re-clad and refurbishment projects, the company needed to find an effective solution to applying the same credentials to every type of façade project going through its factory. This is where digital construction tools really come to the fore.

By using Smart Manufacturing technology from the initial design stage, you can drive standardisation into every aspect of the production process – reducing lead times for contractors and improving cost efficiency, whether that is for standard rainscreen products or bespoke metal façade solutions.

Why Smart Manufacturing?

It was a priority to fully digitise manufacturing documentation. A single cladding project can have 50 different components moving around every area of the factory. Full traceability of each component through production is critical for maximising efficiencies.

As well as practical factory layout changes and new robotic technology, Spanwall has implemented a comprehensive digital information system, and the first phase has completely transformed the design and manufacturing operations.

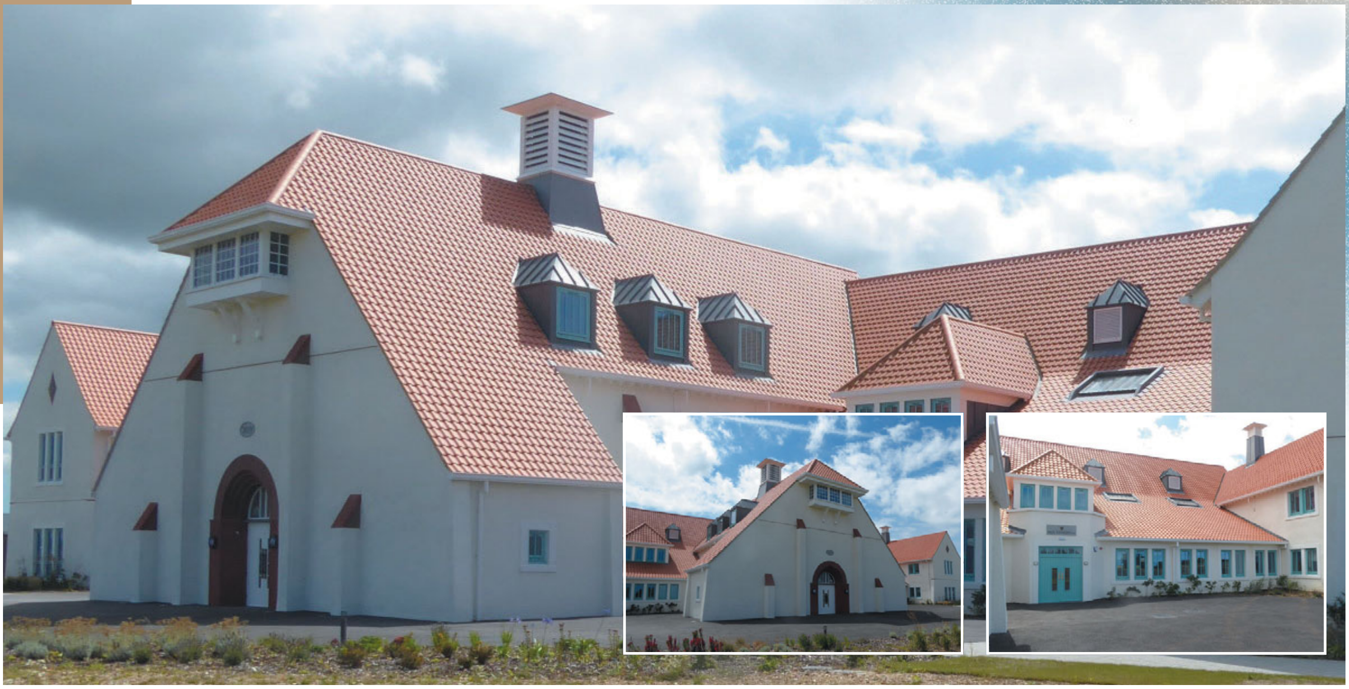
Fostering closer collaborations with customers

The most important area of focus has been on how digital technology can foster even closer collaboration with façade

Continued on page 50...

NANSLEDAN SCHOOL CASE STUDY

Aesthetic renovation of School external envelope in Nansledal, Newquay



Fassa Bortolo bring rendering expertise to prestigious Duchy of Cornwall development.

Fassa Bortolo has finalised a prestigious project for The Duchy of Cornwall, in collaboration with Midas Construction.

The project launched in November 2017 after Fassa was recommended by one of its largest applicators to transform the external envelope of the new Nansledan school.

A final build design was agreed which saw the structure made from steel frame with block, and a sand and cement render finish that would be painted on completion. As a result, the team specified Fassa's FASSA MS 20, a cement-based masonry render, with a roughcast finish and a finishing propriety paint for added durability.

- **General purpose rendering/plastering mortar**
- **Used as a base coat plaster/render with application by hand or machine on walls made of bricks, concrete blocks, rough concrete, etc**

The Fassa team worked closely with contractor A P Williams, who offered their technical expertise, demonstrating how the roughcast render would look by spraying FASSA MS 20 onto a prefabricated mock wall for the Duchy of Cornwall to approve. A roughcast finish provides superior water-resistant properties, something which is considered a priority in Cornwall due to extreme costal weather.

The school was handed over on time in two phases, the first in June 2019 and the final in September 2019.

Linden Williams, Fassa's ASM for the south west comments: "It was amazing just how much time and effort was involved in every stage of the process. Relationships have grown over this project, with all parties including the main contractor, the architect, and our render contractor forging new connections.

We're delighted to have been selected to offer our services to such a prestigious project and are very satisfied with the outcome."

FASSA MS 20.2

MS 20
FASSA BORTOLO

JG21

TO FIND OUT MORE about Fassa Bortolo and its range of render systems and building products.
Visit **www.fassabortolo.co.uk**
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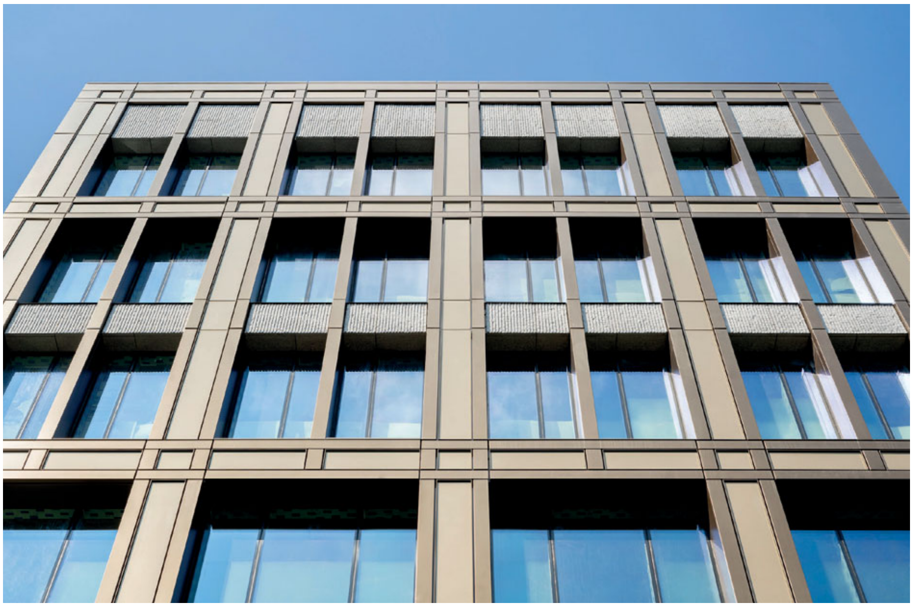
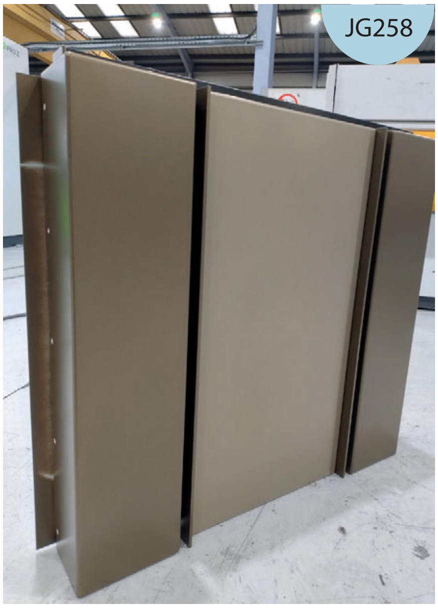




contractors and specifiers and, through this, integrate their digital work into the manufacturer's technical design systems.

Almost every façade contractor, architect or designer involved in a project will have their own BIM processes to draw buildings and components. However, product manufacturers need to create streamlined workflows if they are to harness production efficiencies.

We found there was a considerable amount of duplicated effort and by changing that, we could generate greater efficiencies and increased learnings through collaboration.

A strong digital backbone for manufacturing

There has been a complete move away from paper-based to digital information. Smart Manufacturing can then deliver much deeper insight into production, which continually drives process improvements.

With a real-time view of operations, KPI measures, and sustainability performance, the system facilitates the exchange of information with the façade contractor and, in turn, to the main contractor. This has created a very strong digital backbone for manufacturing operations.

The system can identify any quality irregularities or bottlenecks, analyse cycle times, improve forecasting and provide accurate, achievable lead times to customers and main contractors on site. All these operations are transparent, consistent, precise and even more efficient.

How digital twinning facilitates prototyping

The use of digital technology to streamline processes and workflows has leveraged the power of digital twinning for rapid prototyping of sheet metal façade components before going into full production.

The new technology also allows the live tracking of every component part through each stage of design and manufacturing, delivering real-time reporting for improved efficiency and a completely new level of customer and specifier communication, transparency and traceability.

We know where each component part is in the factory, what stage of the process it is at, when it will move to the next stage, and when the process will be completed.

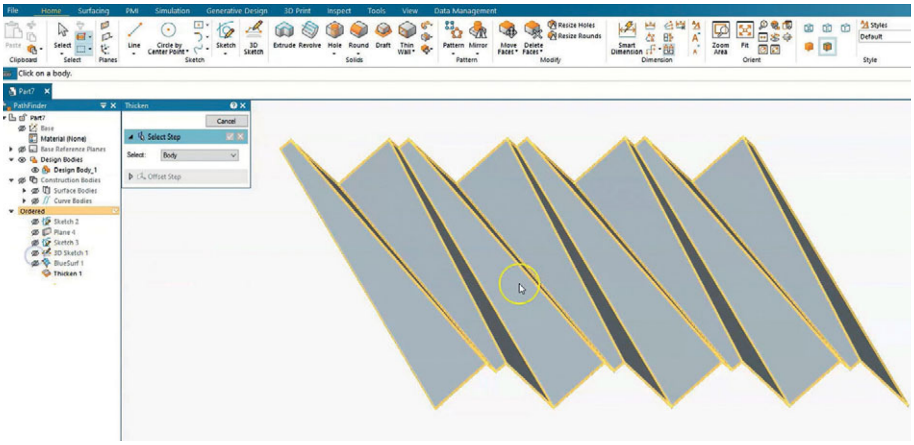
The result is shorter lead times and cost reductions of around 80% for digital prototyping of sheet metal components. Machine set-up times for production runs have been reduced by up to 50%.

The importance of information-driven workflows

The new digital system has integrated multi-disciplinary data to create a truly information-driven product workflow. This allows the creation and testing of new metal rainscreen cladding designs for contractors and specifiers more efficiently, whilst optimising manufacturing resources and significantly increasing overall capacity.

As we are often involved in producing highly complex metal façade solutions for large-scale construction projects, identifying potential issues at the earliest design stage is critical to achieving a 'right first time' approach. The new digital technology provides increased certainty of project delivery on time and on budget, and to consistently high-quality standards.

The next phase of the company's digital transformation will apply the new technology to integrate quality control, preventative maintenance of machinery, health and safety in the factory, and estimating into digital workflows.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JG22

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AIM's acoustic infills to reduce reverberation at Hartlepool Active Wellbeing Hub

AIM – Acoustic & Insulation Manufacturing's cut to fit Acoustic Trough Infills have been incorporated into roof areas at Hartlepool's new £34.65m 'Highlight' Active Wellbeing Hub. Designed to reduce reverberation in buildings with a high proportion of hard internal surfaces, especially where noise is generated within the building such as sports facilities, the infills fit into the troughs of perforated metal profiles used in structural steel roof decks.

The new facility will open at The Waterfront, Hartlepool, in autumn 2025, replacing the town's ageing 1970s leisure centre. The development for Hartlepool Borough Council is being delivered in partnership with main contractor Wates, while the striking design has been created by GT3 Architects.

Via SIG Tyneside, AIM has supplied the Acoustic Trough Infills for two large roof areas to Wates' contractor Chemplas.

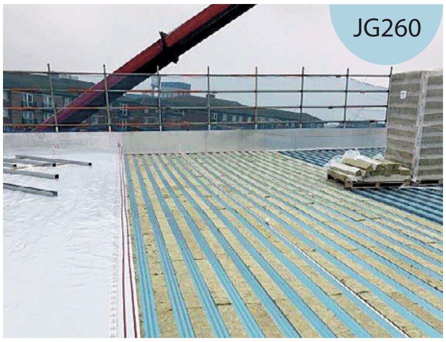
"The roof design specified acoustic trough infills," explains Chris Dale, AIM's Business Development Manager (North). "Having received profile details from Chemplas, AIM cut the easy to fit infills to suit the deck. Though a small part of the roof system and a simple product, our Acoustic Trough Infills are a very effective and cost-efficient way to reduce reverberation in a building."

AIM Acoustic Trough Infills are available in a range of densities and are factory cut to suit any trapezoidal profile or perforated standing seam decking. The infills are stone wool, which is recognised as a good sound absorbing material. Acoustic performance is dependent on the structure of the deck and the open area within it.

AIM manufactures the infills to order and, typically, products are supplied in seven to ten working days. They are provided in a range of finishes, including plain (natural mineral wool), white or black glass tissue-faced or Mylar sleeved for humid or moist environments such as swimming pools.

The Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub is set to have major long-term benefits for Hartlepool in line with the council's commitment to regenerate the town, raise aspirations and support improved health outcomes for local people. Funding is a mix of grant money from Sport England, the Council's Capital Programme, capital contingency funds and borrowing and represents one of the largest investments in Hartlepool for decades.

website: www.aimlimited.co.uk



Revolutionary new natural insulation

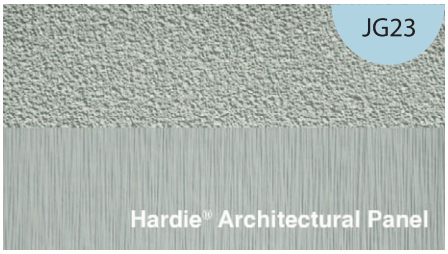
Ecological Building Systems has introduced an exciting new type of sustainable insulation to the UK and Ireland. Gramitherm is the first insulation to be produced from grass, which is sourced from public parks and grass verges, combined with recycled jute fibres, plus a recycled polyester binder, to produce one of the most sustainable forms of insulation on the market.

Resistant to mould, Gramitherm has natural hygroscopic properties which helps to regulate humidity within the building envelope and enhance breathability. The new product has secured an EPD which demonstrates that 1kg of Gramitherm sequesters 1.5kg of CO_2, equivalent post production making it a highly efficient and eco-friendly insulation choice.

As well as an EPD, Gramitherm holds European Technical Approval confirming compliance with relevant standards and its sustainability credentials and low environmental impact. As a natural, sustainable product, Gramitherm is carbon negative (cradle to gate) and has achieved A+ ratings in VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) emission tests.
Highly sustainable, each hectare of grass can produce $200m^3$ of insulation.

email: info@ecologicalbuildingsystems.com website: www.ecologicalbuildingsystems.com

Create a stand-out facade with Hardie Architectural Panel



Hardie Architectural Panel is versatile and high-performance cladding solution, ideal for both contemporary and traditional architectural designs. These fibre cement panels offer a wide range of textures and colours, enabling specifiers to create visually striking facades that can be seamlessly integrated with other materials like stone and brick. Their design flexibility allows for innovative and aesthetically pleasing building exteriors that meet modern architectural standards.

In terms of fire safety, Hardie Architectural Panel achieves an A2-s1, d0 fire rating. This high fire rating provides an added layer of safety for building occupants.
Compliance with UK building regulations is another key advantage of Hardie Architectural Panel. The product meets the requirements of The Building Safety Act and Approved Document B, which mandates the use of materials that enhance fire safety in building exteriors. This compliance ensures that Hardie Architectural Panel is not only safe but also reliable and durable, making them a preferred choice for architects and builders aiming to meet regulatory standards while achieving design excellence.

Overall, Hardie Architectural Panel offers a blend of aesthetic appeal, fire safety, and regulatory compliance, making it an excellent choice for modern construction projects. **www.jameshardie.co.uk**

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JG24

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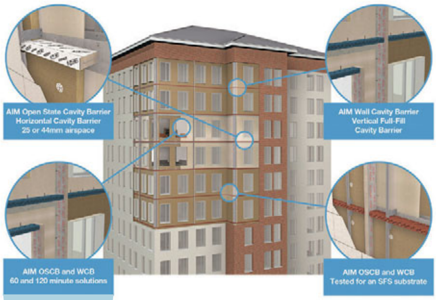
New Passive Fire Protection in Rainscreen Cladding CPD

AIM – Acoustic & Insulation Manufacturing has introduced a new CPD module looking at cavity barriers in rainscreen cladding. The one-hour module covers Passive Fire Protection and the updated regulations that cover fire cavity barriers, as well as exploring the use of other products fixed to or part of facades.


AIM Open State Cavity Barrier
Horizontal Cavity Barrier
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AIM Wall Cavity Barrier
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Cavity Barrier
AIM OSCB and WCB
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AIM OSCB and WCB
Tested for an SFS substrate

JG262

Designed to develop the knowledge and understanding of architects and specifiers, the module explains in which order and how products should be installed. It considers fire testing and the difference between 'Resistance' to and 'Reaction' to Fire and the corresponding terminology. The use of barriers for achieving fire compartmentation within the external wall is also examined with reference to Association of Specialist Fire Protection (ASFP) advice.

The CPD module draws on AIM's 35 years' experience in the design, manufacturing and testing of high-quality passive fire insulation products and is presented by AIM's specification manager Simon Mayes. Simon has 20 years' specification experience in the construction industry liaising with architects, designers and main contractors regarding supply of fire, acoustic and thermal products.

website: www.aimlimited.co.uk

JG263

PowerPanel– the next generation solar solution

Kingspan Insulated Panels is excited to introduce PowerPanel, an integrated roofing and photovoltaic (PV) solution designed for pitched roofs.

PowerPanel is one of the first systems globally to earn the FM Approved mark to FM 4478, meeting rigorous performance tests for fire, hail, wind uplift, and snow loading.

This innovative system combines the thermal efficiency of Kingspan's QuadCore insulated panels with advanced solar technology, delivering U-values as low as 0.11 W/m^{2}K and energy output up to 475Wp using lightweight dual-glass monocrystalline PV modules from LONGi.

Manufactured in the UK using state-of-the-art robotics, PowerPanel ensures precision and reduces the risks of on-site installation, blending high performance with a sleek, slimline design to enhance building aesthetics.

website: www.kingspan.com/gb/en/campaigns/insulate-and-generate-with-powerpanel

JG25

Transforming facades with Fassacouche render systems

At **Fassa UK**, we specialise in high-performance monocouche render systems, delivering durability, style, and efficiency for modern construction. Our through-coloured renders provide seamless, weather-resistant finish with minimal maintenance, perfect for both new builds and renovation.

With a range of colours and textures, our solutions enhance curb appeal while offering superior protection against the elements. Trusted by architects, developers, and homeowners, we pride ourselves on expert craftsmanship and cutting-edge materials.

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Haddonstone supporting sporting greats

As a specialist in the design and manufacture of high-quality cast stone structures, **Haddonstone** takes pride in the craftsmanship that shines through all creations. Offering both standard architectural components and bespoke stonework, every Haddonstone piece is made by hand.

As well as offering support to luxury developers, Haddonstone has also been commissioned to support some of the nation's sporting greats.

Bespoke plinths and pedestals can be seen outside Saracens Rugby Club holding the William Webb Ellis statue aloft while, at West Ham United's London Stadium, a bespoke plinth and feature pedestal sports a statue of the club's most beloved heroes, Bobby Moore, Geoff Hurst and Martin Peters.

"West Ham United, having commissioned Haddonstone to design and manufacture the raised plinth and surrounding narrative paving for supporting our Champions Place iconic new statue, wish to thank all Haddonstone departments for their professional and dedicated input and help throughout all stages of their involvement with the project which has resulted in completing a presentation plinth of the very highest quality," said Neil Waite, project manager at West Ham United.

website: www.haddonstone.com

JG264

Buildingtalk

The online resource for building and construction professionals

Buildingtalk is a major online resource for building and construction professionals. For over a decade, it has offered news, product and technical specifications, as well as case studies, brochure downloads and videos from suppliers across the industry, plus free weekly news and product email updates.

Buildingtalk, also the home of ABC&D and PSB magazines, provides easy access to social media including X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn, features regular guest articles and the latest from industry events.

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The concrete container garden - The Ecotherapy Garden by Tom Bannister at RHS Chelsea

a microcosm of biodiversity in balconies and *containers*

***Anne Jennings**, associate director of landscape architecture at **Lanpro** offers advice to developers on increasing both aesthetics and BNG...*

One of the most popular recent additions to the RHS Chelsea Flower Show has been the Balcony and Container Gardens category. Balcony designers create gardens measuring only 5 x 2m on a podium surrounded by railings, mimicking the balconies on apartment blocks; while container gardens are created at ground level to the same dimensions, representing a small back yard or front garden. Never has the phrase small but perfectly formed been truer than in the presentation of these gardens.

It seems an intrinsic human need to have access to a personal outdoor space and for many people the option of a large garden is simply not viable. Indeed, in some cases a large garden is not desirable due to upkeep demands and nervousness about the skills required to care for a full-blown garden. But container gardening provides opportunities to create green oases in even the most unpromising situations with all the evidence-based holistic health benefits of interacting with nature, and with minimal horticultural skills needed.

Focussing on even the smallest outside space can help developers as they address the challenge of climate change and biodiversity loss. There are, for example previously untapped opportunities to better enable owners or tenants of new apartments to make best use of their balconies. Providing drainage is an easy fix in a new build and can avoid the nuisance of irrigation water dripping onto lower levels. Ensuring the structures can bear the load of fully planted containers is essential and for that reason, built-in planters could be incorporated into the construction design and installation.

Where only small rear or front gardens are provided, rug-sized patches of lawn are often laid over poorly prepared ground. It takes no time at all for this turf to deteriorate, leaving new residents with low-grade outdoor spaces that contribute nothing in terms of beauty, inspiration or ecological richness. Instead, we would recommend a permeable surface, with bricks for a cottagey look, aggregate compacted into modules for a sunny area or resin aggregate for a sleek, contemporary finish, each providing a quality surface for pots and containers. Again, built-in or installed planters around the boundaries would be a helpful contribution to new tenants or owners, and above-ground rain garden planters can support sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS), slowing the pace of water run-off from roofs.

In terms of ecology, developers are required to deliver a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity (BNG) for new projects. Ground level planters in amenity areas planted with shrubs and climbers do score on the BNG matrix and Urban Greening Factor calculations, albeit with very low value whilst those in private spaces will not contribute to the matrix calculation at all. However, there is nevertheless potential for a significant ecological benefit to well-planted private balconies and courtyards in providing food sources and habitats for birds and insects and even small mammals and reptiles if suitable conditions prevail.

For those developers who aspire to creating an ecologically rich development, these small spaces have potential to contribute to the overall vision and ambition.

In terms of environmental responsibility, the property development sector faces huge challenges to achieve net zero emissions from construction projects. An essential factor in this is to move speedily toward green infrastructure-led developments where the networks of green spaces and habitats lead the design process, reversing the pattern of green interventions simply filling the spaces left over from the building and road layout.

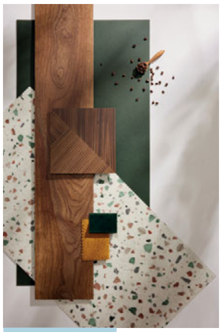
Green infrastructure includes everything from macro interventions (woodlands, meadows, waterways etc.) to micro (seed mixes, nectar rich perennial planting, climber clad walls etc.). Balcony and container plants can be considered within the latter, even contributing to connectivity of green infrastructure when designed as integral elements of a development from the outset.

The tree fern garden – Junglette Garden by Mike McMahon and Jewlsy Matthews at RHS Chelsea

Japanese garden – Tomie's Cuisine the Nobonsai by Tsuyako Asada at RHS Chelsea Flower Show

JG268

The concrete container garden – The Ecotherapy Garden by Tom Bannister at RHS Chelsea

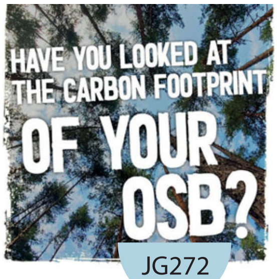


JG270

Vinyl floors with certified pre-consumer recycled content

As part of the **Unilin** One Home sustainability strategy it has undergone an analysis of pre-consumer recycled content within its vinyl floors made at its Avelgem, Belgium production facility. Conducted by third-party certification body SCS Global Services, the analysis has calculated the total content of pre-consumer recycled content used in dryback, loose lay and engineered vinyl floors made under the Quick-Step and Moduleo brands. For dryback and loose lay vinyl floors, such as those in the Moduleo Roots 55, Moduleo Moods and Moduleo Intoo loose lay collections, a minimum 21% pre-consumer recycled content is used (SCS-RC-20324).

At least 22% pre-consumer recycled content can be found in engineered vinyl floors from Quick-Step Alpha Vinyl and Moduleo LayRed (SCS-RC-20324 and SCS-RC-20323). The measurement conforms to SCS Recycled Content Standard V8-0.



JG272

SterlingOSB Zero engineers out carbon

SterlingOSB Zero from **West Fraser** represents a choice of precision-engineered square edge or tongue & groove boards which are selected for applications such as flooring, roofing and offsite cassette or timber frame manufacturing; for practical and economic reasons. Additionally, although the 'Zero' in the name refers to there being no added formaldehyde in the formulation, it also resonates with the brand's potential to help combat global warming. The board is primarily manufactured from a natural product which in itself locks in CO_2 from the atmosphere, with round wood sourced as sawmill residues and co-products in the form of peeled chips. West Fraser, furthermore, ensures that all of its wood fibre is sourced from responsibly managed forests via stringent due diligence assessment, carrying chain of custody, meaning stocks are conserved by replanting and carefully planned cropping.

warringtonfire
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VISITOR

JG271

Warringtonfire celebrates successful grand opening for laboratory

With over 150 guests in attendance, **Warringtonfire** hosted the grand opening of its new state-of-the-art fire resistance testing facility at Birchwood Park, Warrington. To mark the occasion, customers, academics, trade bodies, media and local dignitaries were given a tour of the new facility as well as the opportunity to hear from some of the leading minds in the construction industry on a range of critical safety topics. Speakers included Element's CEO, Jo Wetz, technical experts in fire resistance from the company, as well as keynote speaker, Paul Morrell OBE, who previously served as Chief Construction Adviser to the UK government.

JG273

Restored and renewed for future generations

Architecture studio Nex has undertaken a comprehensive refurbishment of The Jackson Library at Exeter College, Oxford.

The material palette for the Grade II listed building is a considered fusion of old and new, placing an emphasis on craftsmanship and natural materials. Bespoke oak joinery is teamed with **Junckers** 185mm wide Oak Nordic plank floorboards fitted throughout the study areas. The solid wood floor provides a hard-wearing surface for the expected high-traffic levels and the white-pigmented Nordic finish reflects natural light from the building's new roof lights.

Solid wood is an excellent flooring choice for heritage buildings. It offers both an authentic, natural material traditionally specified for a building of this calibre, and a hard-wearing surface with a design life of 60+ years.

website: www.junckers.co.uk

GEORGE & ABBOTSFORD HOTEL

JG274

Advanced rings in new fire safety for Scottish Borders Hotel

When the George and Abbotsford Hotel in Melrose urgently required an upgrade to its existing fire alarm system, Safe Services installed a new **Advanced** MxPro 5 analogue addressable fire panel to provide industry-leading protection.

With guest and staff safety of paramount importance, the hotel needed an upgrade to its existing fire alarm system to bring it up to Category L2 coverage standards as the current system was obsolete and was starting to fail.

Safe Services installed an Advanced MxPro 5 four-loop analogue addressable fire panel, with all four loops used to meet the requirements of this large hotel. The Advanced panel was also seamlessly integrated with EMS Firecell wireless devices. Due to the size of the hotel, it would have been impossible to install cabling because of the extensive downtime that would be needed to fit the cables. The fire system was also interfaced with a kitchen suppression system to provide extra protection.

MxPro 5 is the fire industry's leading multiprotocol fire panel and is certified by FM Approvals to the EN 54 standard. It offers customers a choice of four detector protocols and a completely open installer network, backed up by free training and support. MxPro 5 can be used in single-loop, single-panel format, or easily configured into high-speed networks of up to 200 panels covering huge areas.

website: www.advancedco.com

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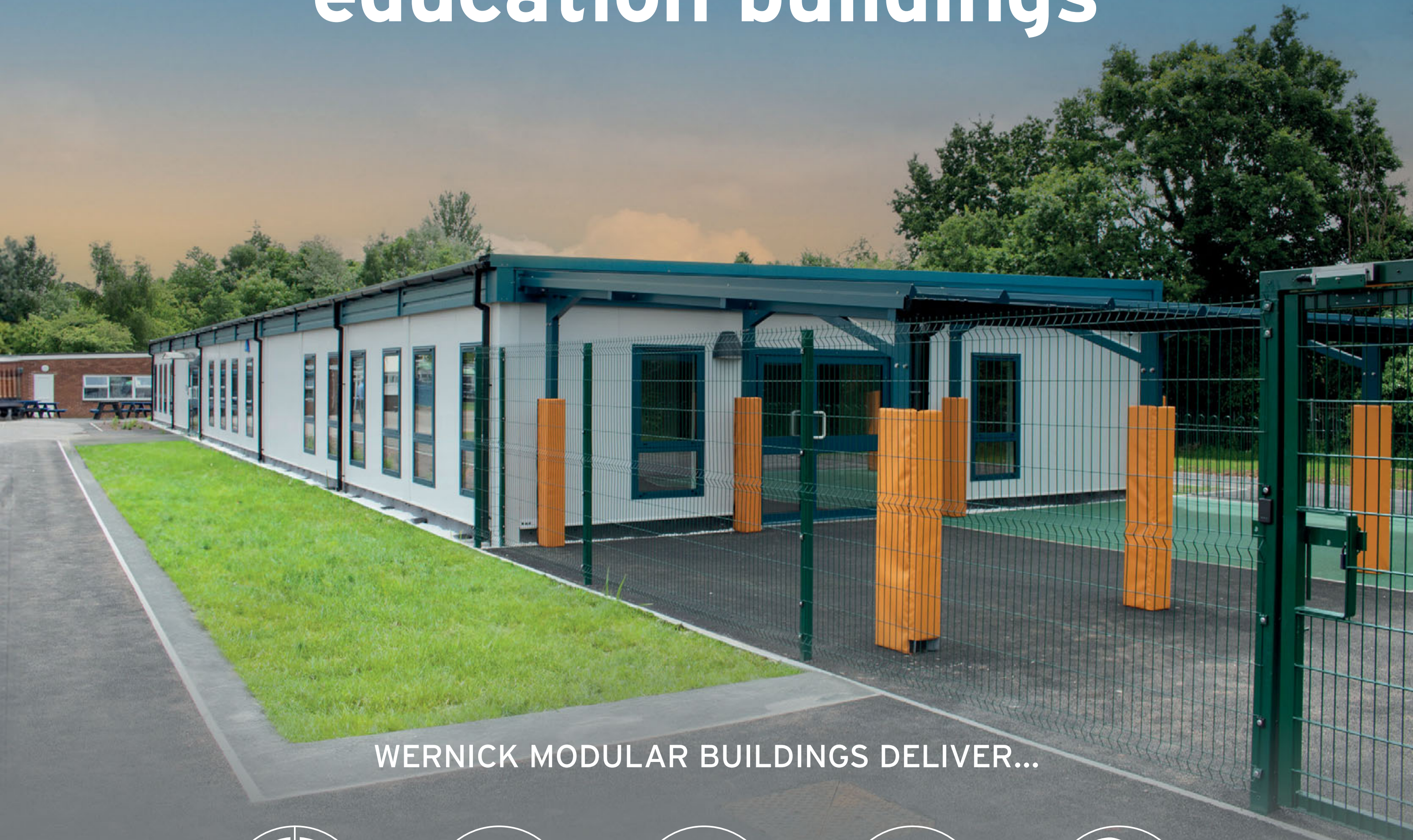

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